

**2019**  
**Australian Schools Orienteering Championships (ASOC)**

**OA National Schools Coordinator**  
**REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION:**

This report has the main perspective of the OA National Schools Coordinator. However, as I was also the Convenor of the 2019 OACT ASOC Organising Committee, there will inevitably be content which comprises both perspectives.

Initial planning began as early as June 2016, when the venues for the 2019 Oceania carnival were being considered by OACT, NSW and OVIC. There was little awareness among the states of the need to consider how the organisation of ASOC 2019 might sit within the broader Oceania/Australian Carnival. When it was brought to the attention of the relevant state authorities, the need for booking suitable Schools accommodation was realised. At this stage, I took on this task in an informal manner, mostly because I was the only person (on the OACT Board) with some contemporary experience of ASOC from both a team management and a carnival organisational perspective.

Given that the first part of the carnival was to be based in and around Wagga Wagga, the obvious accommodation centre was Borambola, the NSW Sport and Recreation Centre, previously used for ASOC accommodation in 2011. The initial booking was made for the full nine nights of the Oceania Carnival, for a group of 130 students and accompanying team officials. A 25% deposit of the total was paid, with OACT carrying this expense. There was always some concern as to whether Borambola would, in fact, be able to house a greater number of students should the team sizes all be at maximum. However, this was speculative; more importantly, a good accommodation base was secured early in the preparation timeline.

**1. PLANNING:**

(a) Securing accommodation was the critical pre-event arrangement. In so doing, I became the de facto ASOC organiser, and during the early part of 2018, co-opted Ann Scown (previously on the organising committee for ASOC 2013 with me) and Jane Barnett, ACT Schools team manager, to form the 2019 organising committee.

I attended the 2018 Easter Schools meeting, in Tasmania, at which I was able to give preliminary information about the 2019 event to those present. Planning continued, with an emphasis on providing initial information on accommodation and costs, travel arrangements, the draft Oceania program and other related logistical issues.

The context within which we were doing this planning was also changing as ASOC lost the endorsement of School Sport Australia (SSA) and moved to endorsement by Orienteering Australia (OA). Pending the finalisation of these arrangements, we used such documentation as the SSA/OA Rules, SSA Codes of Behaviour, and SSA team paperwork as draft templates for our planning.

The first official Invitation to ASOC 2019 was circulated at the Post-Event meeting after ASOC 2018, held at West Beach, Adelaide. This was a critical meeting, as it sought to establish the structure under which ASOC would operate under the auspices of OA. (There was no longer a National Secretary (Orienteering) responsible to SSA, for example). This meeting established a Select Committee of Orienteering Australia with membership as:

) The Orienteering Australia Schools Coordinator as chair, appointed by the OA Board;

) One nominee of each state association (normally an official of the state's Schools team). I considered my position overnight, and the next day offered my services to OA in a one-year interim capacity as the OA Schools Coordinator. This seemed a logical position as I was already the 2019 ASOC Organiser and felt that this would aid the final transition from SSA to OA endorsement. My offer was accepted by the President (OA).

Over the next few months I began to consider appropriate documentation, and undertook to rewrite the Rules, drawing together the SSA and OA Rules into one coherent document. I attended part of the OA December annual conference which ratified the new structure, and authorised my continuing to develop not only my own role, but also the implementation of the ASOC event recommendations which had come out of the October 2018 Post-Event meeting.

I then presided over the Easter Schools meeting in Perth WA. Further and updated general information was given out to the state representatives present. Importantly, the Rules were ratified by that meeting; they were then forwarded to OA and later published on the OA website.

I must record my thanks to Blair Trewin for the guidance and oversight I received as I developed these Rules and other paperwork.

In the meantime, specific planning continued. In particular, there were two critical changes to be made with the accommodation. It became apparent that in SA there had been a considerable amount of driving to events from the West Beach Caravan Park accommodation – this had necessitated early starts, long days, and compromised performances by a number of the team officials who were competing at national elite level themselves. In late October 2018, I contacted the managers at The Old Priory, Beechworth, to arrange accommodation for the final weekend of the Oceania Carnival, which was based in that area. The management (who had been there for only one week), were particularly helpful and assured me that they would be able to accommodate all of the students and officials – at that time we were expecting perhaps 150 students.

The second change to accommodation had to be made early in 2019 when NZ accepted the invitation to send two teams to ASOC - 40 students plus accompanying officials. It was then immediately apparent that there would be insufficient room at Borambola, so I contacted the Big4 Caravan Park in Wagga Wagga, who indicated that they would be willing and able to accommodate the two teams. Knowing the importance of the social interaction enabled by having all teams on one site, I was able to arrange with Borambola that they would provide evening meals for the NZ teams; although there was a 25 minute drive between Borambola and the Big4 Caravan Park (centrally located in Wagga Wagga), having the NZ participants on site meant that they could enjoy all of the Borambola facilities, meet with all of the Australian teams, share in all of the formal and informal social events, have team meetings etc. The move to Beechworth later in the week further meant that all of the ASOC participants and their officials (number estimates suggested perhaps 190 – 200 people altogether) were accommodated in the one venue for the final weekend of the Oceania competition.

(b) While accommodation was the key and the most demanding factor in pre-event planning, there were a number of other aspects of the ASOC program which necessitated decision-making and information sharing including:

- ) Awards - medals
- ) Presentation Dinner: venue, menu, guest speaker, invited guests, special awards, Honour Team gifts
- ) Budget development
- ) Liaison with event planners and controllers; timing of events

- ) Sponsorship (SSSI)
- ) Event entries
- ) Daily programming; presentations at events
- ) Event organisation: tents and eskys; commentary; points scoring
- ) Printed material: student program; officials' handbook
- ) Accommodation: menu planning, rooming allocations; dietary needs; special requirements (by venue)
- ) Liaison with the Oceania Carnival Director (Stephen Goggs); liaison with the Oceania Financial Officer (Andrew Hobson) and the Logistics Officer (Maurice Patten);
- ) Ongoing availability to liaise with all state and NZ team officials
- ) Provision of regular ASOC Bulletins (Easter/April, July, August, September (supplement))
- ) Registration material and information for each team
- ) Social program: Trivia Night, Scavenger Hunt, Opening Ceremony/Start Draw, SSSI presentation; Aston Key Q&A

### **3. GENERAL LIAISON and BUDGET DEVELOPMENT:**

From a very early stage I was in constant liaison with Stephen Goggs, as the Oceania Carnival Director. At all times Stephen was accessible and both keen and willing to incorporate ASOC as a competition centrepiece into the whole Carnival.

Early in 2019, I began negotiations with Andrew Hobson (OACT), the Oceania Financial Officer, to develop the ASOC budget. This was a productive and supportive process; this year we were asked to contribute to the overall Carnival, through a \$35 event levy on each athlete, on top of the usual OA event levies covering ASOC specific expenses such as medals, Honour Team gifts, Presentation Dinner expenses (including the guest speaker), stationery and printing, sundry prizes and supplies. The final figure for the levy was \$70: \$35 for the Carnival levy and \$35 for the ASOC component. Accommodation was charged on a cost-recovery basis, and dinner was costed at \$40 to allow for non-paying guests, drinks at dinner, the DJ, and the guest speaker. Tents and eskies were bought and supplied to each of the nine teams for the duration of the carnival. As final figures are yet to be reconciled, how closely we are to budget has yet to be determined. The provision of the SSSI sponsorship was not known when the initial costings were done, and it is possible that that donation may well assist in ensuring that there will be little (or certainly a lesser) cost over-run. Indicative costings were done reasonably early, and final costs circulated in July, so that each of the states and New Zealand could develop their own budgets. Final invoices to the states and New Zealand were sent out three weeks ahead of ASOC; these also included the three event entry fees (a total of \$75 per competitor). My understanding is that these were paid in a timely manner. Thank you to Andrew for handling all of the financial matters, including the prompt payment of invoices (often prior to the receipt of income) and reimbursements.

Thank you to Maurice Patten, the Carnival Logistics Officer who transported the eskies to Borambola, and ensured the availability of the tents at each event so that teams did not have to transport these themselves during the week.

Separately, it was useful that I was able to make a day visit to Wagga Wagga in early July 2019 to visit Borambola, The Big4 Caravan Park, the Wagga Wagga RSL and the Tourist Bureau. I was able to inspect the various sites and check available facilities, as well as making personal contact with staff, get further information, and collect useful maps and tourist information for later dissemination to teams. I was not able to do this with The Old Priory, but I had stayed there with Schools Orienteering on two previous occasions; email and phone communication was constructive and helpful at all times.

#### **4. STRUCTURAL CHANGES TO ASOC AND PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

Following the 2018 Post-Event meeting, there were two significant structural changes to be accommodated in ASOC 2019.

- (a) In previous years, teams in each class were of four students, plus reserves (to a maximum of 6 per class, with the team size a maximum of 20). This year, the reserves requirement has been dropped, so that all team members (still to a maximum of 6 per class and 20 per state) could contribute to points. During the planning, two states (WA and Tasmania) requested that they be able to send 7 Junior Boys, as their total team size would still be fewer than 20. This dispensation was allowed to both teams.
- (b) New Zealand was invited to send two teams. These were selected on an equal basis, so that they were effectively competing not only against all of the Australian state teams but also against each other in both the ASOC and the Southern Cross Junior Challenge.

The implications of these two changes affected accommodation arrangements; we catered for 171 students and 28 officials this year, almost 200 people altogether. Start blocks and start times (through the draws) also needed further organisation to cater for the larger numbers. General event management (such as the provision of tents) also needed to cater for nine teams, not eight. In general, there was strong support for both of these innovations, and we should encourage them to be continued.

#### **5. EVENT PLANNING:**

I was in ongoing consultation with the planners and controllers of all three events from early in the year. Decisions made collaboratively included: event start times (allowing for team travel times from accommodation); arena preparation; the use of GPS tracking and on which athletes; quarantine arrangements for these athletes; a change to the one minute start interval in the Sprint to a two minute start interval (due to the small map size and safety concerns); relay teams' structure and numbering; ASOC chest numbers; the provision of commentary; presentations to individuals and relay teams at each event; calculation of ASOC scores. I am indebted to the support given by Blair Trewin, who provided a rich and highly informed commentary and scores calculations on every day of ASOC competition.

Thank you to the personnel associated with each event: Sprint – Briohny Seaman (Planner), Michael Burt (Controller) and Jonathan Ricks (Day Organiser); Long – Phil Walker (Planner), Alex Davey (Controller), Deb Davey (Organiser); Relay – Ann and John Scown (Planners), Grant McDonald (Controller), Sue Garr and David Hogg (Day Organisers) as well as the supporting clubs for each event. The standard of the course setting and presentation was high and has been widely remarked upon and complimented as being both suitable and challenging for competitors at ASOC. We were fortunate with the weather at all stages of ASOC; we had warm to hot days which favoured earlier starters and certainly allowed for enthusiastic support from friends and families as well as other orienteers.

#### **6. INTERSTATE/ NEW ZEALAND COMMUNICATION**

(a) From the early days of planning, an email contact list was developed; this evolved from being a contact list based on the previous year's officials to one which not only had 2019 officials, but also a point of contact for the various states (such as the President or Secretary) and New Zealand. Bulletins were issued regularly (Easter/April, July, August, September (supplement)) and all officials were encouraged to contact me at any time with queries. These were dealt with promptly, and sometimes suggested a wider broadcast of information from particular issues that were raised. At all times, my requests for information, lists etc. were responded to quickly and efficiently by team officials.

(b) I was always grateful to Clive Arthur (SA) whose knowledge of the previous year's events and procedures was called upon on several occasions. Much of the paperwork templates and procedures had been passed on to me after ASOC 2018, and I was also able to draw upon my previous experience in organising ASOC 2013.

(c) There is an Event Manual, originally compiled by a former School Sport Australia National Secretary, Ian Dalton, which was useful for both the National Coordinator and the Event Organiser. This is currently being updated to reflect the change in endorsement to OA and will be forwarded to the Tasmania 2020 organisers as soon as possible.

(d) This year we prepared two program booklets: the Student Program, and the Team Official's handbook. While much of the material in each was the same, the format and some of the particular content was altered to suit each of the audiences.

(e) It was timely this year to update all of the Event History, as this had not been done for the previous four or five years. Thank you to Blair Trewin who undertook to provide all of the missing data which was then included in the Student Program. This will be updated prior to its being forwarded to Tasmania for 2020.

(f) During the year there was some direct and persistent lobbying to me about possible changes to the structure of ASOC. Lobbyists were encouraged to respect the established procedures: that is, any motions for change would be put to the Post-Event meeting, for consideration, voting and then, if and as appropriate, further consideration and ratification at the annual OA conference. The lobbying culminated in the preparation of a Discussion Paper on the future of ASOC by OA; this was circulated to all states in early September, only about three weeks prior to ASOC, and team officials were asked to bring state responses to the 2019 Post-Event meeting. This procedure was followed, and the responses have now gone to OA for further consideration.

(g) The ASOC Rules were re-written early in the year, and were put to the Easter meeting for ratification. After some minor changes of wording (to more clearly reflect intent), these were adopted in a timely manner.

(h) Similarly, the SSA Code of Conduct was adapted to fit directly with existing OA documentation. This is a comprehensive document, covering the behaviour of athletes, parents, coaches and managers and other officials or parties with a vested interest. This was presented in a draft form to team officials prior to ASOC; further comments were also considered with modifications as requested. The new OA Code of Conduct was ratified the Pre-Event meeting, again with some minor changes of wording to better reflect the specific nature of orienteering. This will shortly go to OA for publication.

## **7. EVENT ENTRY, START DRAWS and EVENT PRESENTATION:**

(a) The ASOC entries were again handled separately from all other Oceania/Australian events. I record my thanks to Ron Pallas (NSW), who prepared a Guide Sheet for team managers to facilitate their entering students in the Individual and Relay events. Each team manager was accorded Eventor rights by their state, and entered students in the Sprint event only, as this data was also able to be used for the Long event. The Relay teams were entered with dummy entries only (i.e. to get names into the system in the correct classes). However, there were significant problems with New Zealand's entries as Eventor was not able to be used in the same way. The resolution to this was the manual entry directly into the event files of the NZ team members by Ron Pallas. Ron's assistance was greatly appreciated after it became apparent that the NZ team management could not do the entries directly. However, this is obviously neither desirable nor sustainable. Apparently this problem was evident in 2018 so it is disappointing to record that it was not addressed prior to entries being made this year.

(b) 171 students and 28 officials participated as follows: ACT (20) + 3 officials; NSW (20) + 3 officials; VIC (19) + 3 officials; QLD (20) + 4 officials; SA (19) + 4 officials; WA (15) + 3 officials; TAS (18) + 3 officials; NZ Harua (20) + 3 officials; NZ Karahiwi (20) + 2 officials. There were 43 Junior Girls, 51 Junior Boys, 34 Senior Girls, and 43 Senior Boys.

(c) Historic practice was followed again this year with Start Draws. All teams nominated Start Block requests for their team members for the Sprint and Long Individual events. With nine teams and up to seven members per state in each class, there was the possibility of any one start block (of the six available) having 11 runners. In practice this did not eventuate, but in some classes there were only one or two runners nominated in an early start block, and none in the final state block. The Start Draws (Sprint and Long) were done on the Sunday evening prior to the Opening Ceremony, using a manual drawing system, in the presence of representatives from most states. A spreadsheet had been created to facilitate recording of each draw. After this had been completed, I then manually transferred this information to a spreadsheet created by Matthew Purcell, the manager of the Finish Team. This was later published on Eventor as well as being used to create results.

(d) A simple Opening Ceremony was held in the gymnasium at Borambola on the afternoon of 30<sup>th</sup> September, with teams assembled in their formal uniforms and with a large number of parents and friends present. The Sprint Start Draw was announced, with students coming forward to be presented and acknowledged in groups for each class. We had originally intended to have a PowerPoint presentation to accompany this, but a number of logistical problems (including limited IT facilities in the gym and some delay in getting appropriate biographical information and photos from the state/NZ teams) necessitated the decision not to use such an accompaniment. The Sprint Draw was released on Eventor later that night, prior to the event the following day.

(e) The Long Start Draw was announced to runners by their team managers after 5pm on Tuesday (1<sup>st</sup> October), for the next day's event. Some technical issues meant that it was not published on Eventor until early on the Wednesday morning.

(f) Relay team structures were supplied to me on the afternoon of the Long event. Matthew Purcell came out to Borambola at 4pm, for a meeting during which the relay teams were entered and assigned numbers. At the same time a small group of officials created the various composite teams. All of these names and team numbers were entered into the Eventor files. It is appropriate here to record my thanks to Matthew Purcell (and his team of Code Cadets) for his assistance and support at all stages of the draws and relay teams entry processes; it was all handled quickly and efficiently, and late changes and corrections were also managed and processed with minimum fuss.

(g) Results at all events were displayed according to the Oceania Carnival structures. In addition event results were available on Eventor as usual. I was able to record results manually so that scores could be tallied on a daily basis. Thanks go to Blair Trewin for his careful and accurate oversight and management of the scores. We were able to have daily presentations for the individual and relay events (medals covering all contingencies were prepared the evening before). I am grateful to Blair Trewin for his assistance at all events, to Phil Walker (OACT) for his assistance at the Long event, and to the Mayor of Wagga Wagga City Council, Greg Conkey, who (after a delayed arrival) was able to be acknowledged at the Relay presentations. The Team Sprint and Team Long awards were made at the Presentation Dinner. This is where we had significant problems with an insufficient number of medals, despite our best initial estimates. The decision was made to distribute the Team Sprint medals, but to withhold all the Team Long medals pending the further ordering of missing medals. These have been ordered, and will be distributed to states (named for each athlete), for further distribution as soon as possible.

(h) It is evident that there is considerable reliance upon the organisers' and (especially) Blair Trewin's capacity to make timely calculations of point scores, for both ASOC and the Southern Cross Junior Challenge (SCJC). It is timely to investigate some sort of automated system to enable the quicker calculation of these points, and to consider how best to broadcast daily point scores to a wider audience - those at the Carnival as well as those not at the Carnival but with an interest in the ASOC outcomes. This includes the final scores (and the announcement of the Honour Team). While this information was broadcast as news items, there was an unnecessary delay in getting the information to OA for posting on the OA website.

(i) I would like to acknowledge the smooth functioning of the three ASOC events. Each was accorded prime status on the days, and we were pleased to have a large number of supporters present every day. Team facilities were well arranged, and queries to organisers and other personnel were quickly handled and resolved.

(j) The appointed Protest Jury did not need to sit. There was one instance of a student being seen to cross an Out-of-Bounds wall during the Sprint. He later disqualified himself, as had another runner earlier in the day, for a similar action.

(k) There was a potential problem at the end of the Long event, when there were four Junior Boys (the largest class) whose return was being waited on. Two finished safely, but it took some checking, and the organisation of a search party to ascertain that the other two boys who had not finished had actually not started. In both cases, a team official/coach had informed a member of the Start Team but this information was not passed on to the Finish team. While the final outcome meant everyone was safe, the heat of the day and the potential time that the boys had been running was of real concern – unnecessarily so.

## **8. REGISTRATION:**

As Boramabola was about a 25-minute drive out of Wagga Wagga, it was decided to collect all of the Carnival registration information from Canberra beforehand, and to distribute this with the ASOC registration packs when teams arrived on the Friday afternoon.

When teams arrived, each team received a coloured-coded document wallet containing: tourist information and maps; all accommodation/lodge/room allocations and site maps (for both/all venues); team lists; student program booklets and team officials' handbooks; sets of the most current IOF orienteering symbols sheets; start block request forms (Sprint and Long) and Relay nomination forms; Oceania chest numbers and pins; ASOC chest numbers; a labelled esky (containing one water bottle donated by Intersport per student). In addition team officials received official Oceania water bottles and Oceania tote bags. On the following morning, they were also provided with a cold-pack for each esky and a bottle of sunscreen to be used throughout the week.

There were some apparently missing Oceania registration numbers but all was able to be sorted out at Registration the next day as all information about missing numbers had been forwarded to the Registration team (per Andrew Hobson) a couple of days prior to teams' arrival.

## **9. ACCOMMODATION:**

Once accommodation was secured, deposits were made as requested by each venue. Further planning was delayed until team numbers were known. However, there were ongoing discussions with Borambola and The Old Priory about meals and dietary requirements.

Borambola, as a NSW government institution, required all personnel who were using their facilities (staying and/or eating on-site) to complete an online registration form, which provided important medical and dietary information. All team managers were provided with a link they gave to their team members. This process was begun in July, and it is pleasing to report that all on-line registrations were completed in a timely manner. I received regular (weekly, then daily) updates of the registration status, which enabled easy follow-up with individual states where there appeared to be errors and omissions. Importantly, Borambola made all of this information available to me, and were agreeable to my being able to provide the dietary information to The Old Priory to avoid otherwise double handling of information by team managers.

Once final numbers were known, I was able to use site plans to finalise the room allocations at each venue. Borambola's accommodation included lodges (for up to 12 students), a mix of single and double rooms for staff, and a further motel-style unit with four shared bunk-style rooms for staff. The Old Priory had a mix of large dormitories (up to 32 bunks, for students), and smaller rooms/clusters of rooms for students and staff.

Discussions with both venues enabled menus to be planned. Cooked breakfasts were provided and there was every attempt to provide evening meals of suitable variety and quantity for athletes. At Borambola, the students made their own lunches (food stuffs were provided in the dining room), and lunches were provided at the Old Priory. At Borambola, there was always fruit available (at every meal, and in large fridges in the central courtyard). Large bowls of fruit were available at The Old Priory from which students could help themselves.

At Borambola the evening meal was done with two sittings; a roster was drawn up which ensured that teams alternated between the first and second sittings, and were with different combinations of teams to encourage further socialising. (Those with special dietary requirements always received their meals first at each sitting). The two-sitting structure enabled teams to have their evening team meetings during their 'non-eating' dinner sitting. At The Old Priory, teams were spread over three dining areas, which worked effectively. Only those with special diets were kept together; those students were able to have a friend or two with them as well.

Borambola provide an extensive range of 'free-time' activities both sporting and recreational (such as outdoor chess). The Old Priory had several recreation rooms, but fewer structured activities. This was not a drawback, however, as students were able to walk into the township, and were able to provide their own entertainment otherwise for the two nights there. Both venues had a range of meeting areas available to teams.

## **10. SOCIAL PROGRAM:**

Apart from the Opening Ceremony and the Presentation Dinner, we were keen to respect practices of many years, in particular the Trivia Night and the Scavenger Hunt. I was aware that in the past year or two one or both of these had become an online process; I had early discussion with Angus Haine, who had coordinated both events in 2018 for SA.

(a) Trivia Night. It was decided to have a 'retro' event – one with pencil and paper. This was held Saturday night (28<sup>th</sup> September) in the Borambola dining hall. Students had to form teams (with restrictions of state, age etc.), and then collected two table rounds of questions to be completed during the evening. There were five rounds of 15 or 10 questions: a mixture of trivia, and a short round pertaining to ASOC and this year's competitors. A bank of team officials did the marking, and the running results were displayed by Tom de Jongh on the large screen in the room. This was a busy and enjoyable evening for all; I was grateful to the officials who helped out with marking (and who participated themselves!).

(b) The Scavenger Hunt utilised the 2018 process, which had students downloading photos and videos of the various challenges onto a dedicated (i.e. closed) Facebook page. It was quite a lengthy Hunt, and there was no expectation that states would be able to complete it all; however, it made the most of local tourist attractions and an awareness of the broader Oceania Carnival as well as a couple of historical components of ASOC. While entries were to be in by Friday (4<sup>th</sup> October), that was also a travel day, and all team officials were involved in the Post-Event meeting that evening. The result of this was that I had to ask Angus Haines to judge it (he had made the offer earlier and had facilitated the use of the Facebook page). I was pleased to accept this offer; again the hectic event schedule caught up with us both, and the result (Tasmania was a clear winner) was not broadcast until the Monday after the Carnival had ended. They will receive the shield at a later date.

(c) Following the Sprint Gold success of Aston Key at JWOC 2019, Warren Key was keen for Aston to have an informal presence at ASOC. 'An Evening with Aston Key - Q&A' session was organised for the final Saturday night, at The Old Priory. Aston spent about an hour talking with students in an informal panel style discussion, generously answering students' questions. Angus Haine, also at JWOC 2018, accompanied him, which allowed for some questions to go to either or both of the boys. This was a successful initiative, and it was pleasing to be able to tap into Aston's successes within the context of ASOC – he was an ASOC participant and medal winner only last year.

#### **11. SPONSORSHIP BY SSSI (SURVEYING AND SPATIAL SCIENCES INSTITUTE)**

As I had had no involvement with ASOC 2018, I was initially unaware that there had been a sponsorship agreement in 2018 between OA and SSSI. This information came to me through a casual conversation with Stephen Goggs. The first formal notification I had was in an email from Stephen to Su Ling Meimaris, the SSSI Regional Operations Manager – Victoria in early June 2019. Stephen included my name as the appropriate contact person for an SSSI representative, Megan Lavender (SSSI, NSW). It transpired that Blair was also in discussion with Megan. I was expecting to hear from Megan, and sent a series of emails but received no reply. With some degree of frustration, I eventually tracked down Megan's phone number (from the SSSI website), and eventually established contact that way. However, sustaining this was not easy, and I constantly had to initiate a conversation. I eventually received a copy of the 2018 agreement between OA and SSSI: there was to be a \$2000 grant, with a return opportunity for SSSI to have its organisation promoted and for there to be an hour-long presentation to the students.

I was keen to honour this agreement but need to record that this took far too long and there was a disappointing lack of communication with SSSI over two or three months in spite of my ongoing efforts. (It eventually transpired that many of my emails went into the SSSI Spam box unfortunately – using the OA email address was a better option although still inconsistent). Eventually, we were pleased to welcome Ms Raelene Forbes (as a NSW representative) to the Presentation Dinner at which she assisted with presenting a number of the awards. Arranging the SSSI talk/presentation was even more challenging. I suggested three dates to Megan, but eventually after nominating one or two speakers (who were then withdrawn), she advised me at the last minute (on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October) that the presenter would be Rob Steel, from Wangaratta (hence an SSSI, Victoria representative) and that the date would be Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October, not one of the three original dates proposed. The Old Priory obligingly provided the data projector etc. that Rob requested. However, in spite of a significant amount of assistance by Tom de Jongh (ACT), there was a technical mismatch with the equipment, and the presentation by Rob Steel was substandard and disappointing. Rob later commented on the good behaviour of the students as he apologised for the presentation. Some promotional materials had been sent to me at The Old Priory, and these were available at the evening, and I am quite sure that a number of the students would have found the presentation of interest. The evening's problems were compounded by its being at the end of the Travel Day and at the same time as many officials were unavailable as they were committed to the Post-Event meeting, which had been scheduled months before.

I later spoke to Su Lin in response to Rob's report to her of the evening's disappointments, and have assured her that I shall pass on the SSSI information in a timely manner to the 2020 organisers.

## 12. PRESENTATION DINNER – Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October:

(a) After discussions with orienteers from Wagga Wagga, we chose the Wagga Wagga RSL Club for the Dinner Venue. This was secured early in 2019. Following a suggestion from the Events Manager, I applied to the RSL Board for a waiver of the \$600 Room hire. This was granted willingly, so we ensured that the Club's logo (and sponsorship) was included in all of the Carnival material. The Buffet dinner at \$35/head was a suitable choice for the meal.

(b) A recommendation from the RSL Club enabled us to engage a local Wagga Wagga DJ for the evening. Although we were late starting the disco (as the presentations had run over time, and there was a delay with starting the meal service), the musical services provided were excellent and well received by the students. This part of the evening is always a highlight for the athletes and they obviously enjoyed themselves.

(c) Early in the year I heard an advocate of Meningococcal Australia, Eliza Ault-Connell, speak at an Academy of Science forum; her talk was impressive and interesting, so I approached her to be the guest speaker (she lives at Wodonga). While she was not only interested and available, her initial asking fee of \$1500, plus travel expenses, was well beyond our budget. However, it is with pleasure that I record that so keen was she to be part of the dinner she offered to meet our budget fee of \$500 (in total). Eliza Ault-Connell is a double amputee (from her teenage years) due to her contracting Meningococcal Disease, and has since become a very successful Paralympian. Her talk to the students addressed aspects of resilience and meeting challenges across all aspects of our lives, particularly with sport.

(d) A Service Award to Stephen Bird (Victoria) had been proposed and accepted in 2018, but had never been publicly acknowledged. During the year Joan Sheldon (QLD) was also nominated for an OA Service Award. Both of these awards were presented at the Dinner; we were very pleased that Stephen was able to attend to receive his in person. Joan was not able to be with us, so received her award in absentia. It was accepted by Simeon Burrill and Jack Neumann, former Queensland Schools team-members and now Joan's successors.

(e) Early in the year it was decided that we should continue the tradition of presenting Honour Team members with an Honour Team Orienteering top (we had instituted this in 2013, and the process had been followed in three subsequent years). We continued with using 'dirtyd' of New Zealand as the supplier (as we had in 2013), and were very pleased with their assistance in design, their process management and consultation, and the very competitive pricing that we were offered as well.

(f) Honour Team certificates were prepared.

(g) A very late addition to the awards was made just a couple of days before the Dinner. Neil Simson advised me of the Simson family's decision to present the Rob Simson Memorial Shield to recognise 'The Best Newcomer', in recognition of the significant contribution Rob had made to the establishment and advocacy of the Australian Schools Orienteering Championships 31 years ago.

(h) Medals: The increased team sizes, with teams of up to 7 potentially being eligible for medals in the Team Sprint and Team Long categories, and with two NZ teams in each class being eligible for medals, meant that there was always going to be some shortfall in the medals order. (Previously with reserves in each class, the maximum team size could be only four). We used a local supplier for the medals and had excellent service from them at all times. However, even with ordering 210 medals, we ran out, and had to order a further 51 medals. One unexpected factor was that there was a tie for the first place in the Junior Boys Team Sprint awards.

(i) Invited guests: These were limited to Blair Trewin (President OA), the guest speaker (Eliza Ault-Connell, Meningococcal Australia), the Wagga Wagga City Council Deputy Mayor (Mr Dallas Tout), and Ms Raelene Doyle (SSSI). Both Mr Tout and Ms Doyle were able to assist with presentations.

Invitations were also sent to landowners and school principals for each of the events on private property (Erin Earth/Kildare College and 'Connorton'), and to the President of the Board of Directors and the General Manager of the Wagga RSL Club. These were all declined.

(j) We began the evening on time at 6.15pm, but it should be noted that the presentations ran well over time, a function of the number of medals and awards, the inclusion of the new award (Rob Simson Memorial Shield) and the taking of photographs – a most necessary part of the evening. We were pleased to have a large number of parents, family and friends present as well to share the celebrations of all team members. Behaviour of team members at the evening was excellent.

(k) Due to space limitations, there were no state flags on display at the Presentation Dinner, nor at the Opening Ceremony. All states and New Zealand had flags which were used at all events; unfortunately, we were not able to acknowledge the flags at these two functions.

### 13. STUDENT BEHAVIOUR:

I am pleased to report that in general student behaviour was of a high standard. While I was not on site overnight, I had confidence in the experience and judgement of all team officials that appropriate standards would be maintained with reference to the Code of Conduct. Borambola officials were an immediate point of contact and would mention any issues or concerns they had while we were at dinner. There were a few injuries resulting from camp activity: a couple of sprained ankles, and a cut on the head (necessitating stitches) were all managed well by staff and students. Unfortunately, there was one instance of two students being out-of-bounds after lights out on the Thursday evening after the disco. The ACT boy involved was sent home on the Friday morning, and the SA girl involved was isolated from her team while she was at The Old Priory. Different sanctions were applied to the female because of the difficulty in sending her home early. Again, I was very satisfied with the actions taken by officials.

To my knowledge, the events were generally accident free: one SA Junior Boy injured his ankle on a flight of stairs in the Sprint. He was taken to hospital where the ankle was assessed as being badly sprained but not broken. One NZ Senior Boy collapsed at the end of the Long distance event; he was appropriately treated by his team managers, and was checked by a visiting NZ doctor (also a Carnival competitor). He recovered well enough to compete comfortably in the Relay the next day.

### 14. THANKS:

Throughout this report I have thanked a number of people and organisations, but it is appropriate to reiterate my thanks to the following. Without them, this carnival would not have taken place.

- ) Ann Scown (OACT) – on the organising committee with me from the outset; although unable to be present during ASOC, her advice and oversight was invaluable.
- ) Blair Trewin (President OA), and OA Board members
- ) Paul Prudhoe (OA Executive Officer)
- ) Stephen Goggs – Oceania Carnival Director
- ) Andrew Hobson – Oceania Financial Officer
- ) Maurice Patten – Oceania Logistics Officer
- ) Phil Walker (President, OACT) and all OACT Board members
- ) Paul de Jongh (Office Manager, OACT)
- ) Clive Arthur (ASOC 2018 Coordinator)
- ) Ron Pallas (ONSW)
- ) Matthew Purcell and the Code Cadets (Canberra Grammar School)
- ) ASOC Sprint Championships– Briohny Seaman (Planner), Michael Burt (Controller) and Jonathan Ricks (Day Organiser)
- ) ASOC Long Championships – Phil Walker (Planner), Alex Davey (Controller), Deb Davey (Organiser);

- ) ASOC Relay Championships – Ann and John Scown (Planners), Grant McDonald (Controller), Sue Garr and David Hogg (Day Organisers)
- ) All volunteers and club officials
- ) Aston Key (VIC, JWOC) and Angus Haine (SA, IT support)
- ) Borambola Sport and Recreation Centre, Wagga Wagga
- ) The Old Priory, Beechworth
- ) The Big4 Caravan Park, Wagga Wagga
- ) Wagga Wagga RSL & Commercial Club
- ) Mitchell Cross (DJ)
- ) Wagga Wagga City Council
- ) Kildare College and Erin Earth, Wagga Wagga
- ) Jill and Andrew Foster, ‘Connorton’, Wagga Wagga
- ) Eliza Ault-Connell, Meningococcal Australia
- ) dirtyd, New Zealand
- ) Instant Colour Press, Canberra
- ) The Trophy Centre, Canberra
- ) SSSI (NSW and Victoria)
- ) Jane Barnett, Tom de Jongh and Andrew Cumming Thom (ACT team officials)
- ) All ASOC team officials
- ) Parents, teachers and families of all team members

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The larger class sizes within each state team (to a maximum of 20) and the absence of reserves should be continued.
2. Continue the invitation to NZ to send two teams. Both NZ teams had the same uniform. Distinguishing between the two was therefore very difficult; it is suggested that they each have a different competition uniform to enable easy identification.
3. Service Award nominations need to be made prior to the Easter Schools meeting, to enable ratification and timely organisation of their presentation.
4. The entry process for the New Zealand teams needs to be managed differently to that of the Australian state teams if there is to be continued use of Eventor as it was this year. Whatever system is used should be prepared and promoted prior to entries being made, not as an afterthought.
5. Event history must be updated each year by the host state, and then forwarded to the following year’s host state.
6. The Start Draw process would benefit from the introduction of some sort of automated system. It is important to respect and validate the use of Start Blocks at ASOC (this is derived from their use at JWOC), one of the special attributes of the Schools Carnival. Early contact needs to be made with the team handling entries /results to establish clear guidelines for the transmission of information: start times, draws, relay classes, student chest numbers etc.
7. Investigate some sort of automated system to enable the quicker calculation of these points, and consider how best to broadcast daily point scores to a wider audience - those at the Carnival as well as those not at the Carnival but with an interest in the ASOC outcomes. This includes the final scores (and the announcement of the Honour team). While this information can be broadcast as news items, it is necessary to avoid a delay in getting the information to OA and/or posted on the OA website.
8. Although we were not able to display flags this year, that was a matter of regret. It is important to have all state and country flags prominently displayed on public occasions.

The provision of an OA and/or ASOC banner or pennant style flag would add colour and atmosphere to the event arena as well.

9. SSSI for sponsorship – contact must be established very early. I will be forwarding the relevant contact names and email addresses to the 2020 ASOC organisers. An up-to-date agreement between OA and SSSI must be drawn up [I never received one for 2019] to enable a timely interaction between the two bodies for their mutual benefit.

Valerie Barker  
2019 OA Schools Coordinator

21st October 2019