

Minutes of the OA Events Committee meeting, Molong, Saturday April 3 2021

Present: Jenny Casanova (OSA and OA), Robyn Pallas (ONSW), Ann Scown (OACT), John Scown (OACT), Andrew Lumsden (ONSW), Carl Dalheim (OV), Anna Sheldon (OQ), Blair Trewin (OA), Rob Tucker (OSA), Tash Key (OV and NOL), Jim Russell (OV and NOL), Greg Hawthorne (chair and OT)

Apologies: Tony Simpkins (OWA)

1. Confirmation of the major events carnivals.

Representatives from OT, OQ, OV, OACT, OSA, and ONSW confirmed that the organization of the following major carnivals was underway:

2021 Aus, Tas

2022 3Day, Qld

2022 Aus, Vic

2023 3Day, ACT

2024 3Day, SA

2024 Aus, NSW

Noel Schoknecht (OWA) confirmed after the meeting that OWA was well advanced with preparations for the 2023 Australian championships.

2. NOL calendar 2021

There was some discussion of the proposed extension to the 2021 NOL calendar (rounds 5, June 12-14, and round 6 August 21-22), with reservations expressed by OQ, as there is no long weekend in mid-June in Queensland (likewise WA). OSA also noted that some states that have a long weekend in mid-June organise events to take advantage of the holiday.

The major reason for the extended program is to provide high-level competition in Australia due to travel difficulties to and from Australia. OA has decided not to send a team to JWOC in Turkey, and although Australia is considered a low-risk country with no restrictions on entry to the Czech Republic (WOC), the Australian government recommendation is "Do not travel". The NOL representative at the meeting noted the reservations expressed by OSA and OQ.

The proposed 2022 NOL program has an emphasis on sprint for the 2022 sprint WOC in Denmark.

3. Oceania 2024

This event remains problematic (as usual for the Oceania Championships in Australia), and as no state association has committed to organising a stand-alone Oceania Championships, it was resolved that the Events Committee chair should prepare a paper outlining options that would allow a "two major carnival" model without compromising the integrity of Oceania Championships as a recognised regional championship.

The following points were discussed with respect to the 2024 Oceania Championships:

- A combined Australian/Oceania/Schools championships carnival would comprise eleven events (Aus and Oceania sprint/middle/long/relays and schools sprint/long/relays), clearly impractical so some compromise is necessary.
- IOF does not permit regional championships to be 'piggybacked' on national championship races. It was acknowledged that while the IOF rules apply only to M/W 16, 18, 20, 21, holding national championships at some other time for these classes, in all of sprint, middle,

long and relay distances, is impractical and diminishes the magnitude of those championships. Therefore the preferred option is to keep as many of the 2024 Oceania and Australian Championship races as possible intact for all age classes, and to maintain a complete Australia-New Zealand Challenge.

- NSW’s preferred program is for seven events only (Aus plus schools championships) but might consider an 8th event if necessary; both 7-event and 8-event schedules are to be prepared for discussion. These schedules will look at which races could be doubled up during that carnival and/or held at Easter or even QBIII.

4. Event models for years in which the Oceania Championships are held in Australia

1. Stand-Alone

Successfully staged in January 2015 in Tasmania (in conjunction with a round of the World Cup).

2. Split Australian Championships

This model was used in 2011 and 2019 when sprint and middle-distance championships were held as part of an extended Australian 3-Days championships, with the traditional Australian Championships carnival in September/October comprising the Oceania Championship races, the schools championships, and the Australian long distance championships. This model works reasonably well, but one drawback is that staging the relay championships is problematic. One option could be to make the Australian relay championships optional in Oceania years so that the relay competition at the Australian championships is the Oceania relay championships. The extended 3-Days model is preferable to staging Australian championship races at other times of the year as it is more likely to attract competitors than events staged on long weekends that aren’t national public holidays (the Queens Birthday long weekend comes closest with only Queensland and WA not observing the holiday).

3. Combined 3Days and Australian Championships

OA rules do not preclude naming any races which are part of the Australian 3-Days (including the elite prologue) as also being national championship races if necessary. Options that could be considered with this model are to nominate two days of the 3-Days as the Australian sprint and middle-distance championships, or even nominating three days as sprint, middle, and long, although including a long-distance championship as part of a multi-day carnival might require the course lengths to be shorter than would normally be expected (or conversely longer than would be expected for a multi-day race). This model would be ideal for the 2024 Australian 3-Days as Easter in 2024 is very early and quite possibly not part of school holidays. Some thought required as to the exact format!

Options summary

	Examples	Pros	Cons
Stand-alone	2015 (Tasmania)	Satisfies IOF and Aus-NZ Challenge requirements,	High risk as the most suitable time that maximises participation is January. Compromises participation of both Australian and New Zealand competitors if held in a non-holiday period.

Split Aus Champs	2011, 2019 (WA & NSW/ACT/Vic)	Satisfies IOF and Aus-NZ Challenge requirements, financially attractive for organisers.	Additional workload for 3-Day and Aus Champs organisers. Aus Relays are problematic. Unsuited to those years in which the Aus 3Days does not coincide with school holidays. Compromises participation if the Aus Champs races are held at a time other than national holidays (e.g. QB and labour day weekends differ from state to state).
Split Aus Champs with individual 3Days events nominated as Aus Champs races	None	Satisfies IOF and Aus-NZ Challenge requirements, financially attractive for Oceania organisers.	Aus Relays are problematic (unless included as an additional race on Monday with sprint/middle/long on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). Additional work for organisers of the 3Days if the sprint is nominated as the Australian championships. A long-distance race not ideal as part of a multi-day competition. Additional work for the Oceania organisers if an Aus Long is included in the Oceania carnival.

Greg Hawthorne,
Chair, OA Events Committee
3/5/2021