



Dharug Country — May 2026

“WHO runs the country”



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Thanks James, Josh and Vivien for contributing articles. Send any articles for future newsletter to [Vivien](#).

Photos above: Arena at Tasmania middle champ

From the President

As you all know, orienteering gives you lots of opportunities to try new things and visit new areas. It’s also a good way to keep oneself humble. It’s not hard to come a cropper on a course at Gumble or Split Rock. Or even a loss of concentration could easily cause displacement around a sprint or urban course. Last week, I discovered a new way to experience that humbling orienteering feeling. Ian Miller had set a MapRun event at Knightsbridge. These MapRun events are 45min score events that work by GPS ‘pings’ via phone or watch rather than using physical flags and SI units. They make orienteering really accessible as the course is available whenever you are. All was going well for the first six controls but then the ‘pings’ became rather random. Some control locations had no ping, which caused me to run a little further left, a little further right or maybe a circle with no luck. Some pinged up to 70m away from the mapped location and some were spot on. I couldn’t work it out and as you can imagine, was getting pretty annoyed with the whole thing. When I finished and saved my run,

I realised that the event I was using on my watch was 2025-07-14 Knightsbridge, which is subtly different from the map I was looking at which was 2026-05-18 Knightsbridge! Obviously Ian had only changed up a few of the controls from the previous year - just enough to make me feel like I was close but not close enough!

I mentioned last newsletter about the NSW Relay Champs, which will be in the afternoon of Sat 18 July at Wianamatta, Ropes Crossing. This is the day prior to the State League event at Mitchell Park that Garingal are organising. Entries will open very shortly, so keep an eye out and start thinking about who your teammate will be.

Also, the annual Turkey Trot is just around the corner. Two weeks before the Relays. I just had a peek at Emmanuelle’s courses and they look the goods. Once again there will be Rocky Road. Winners are grinners but going on past experience, other participants are also grinners.

It's not just about orienteering



Like many others, we started orienteering with summer series during the week and took a long time (read years) before venturing into weekend orienteering. Weekends for us were for bushwalking including rogaining and canyoning. It was much more appealing to drive up to 4 hours to spend 36 hours immerse in the natural environment than doing similar driving to spend 45 minutes to two hours on an orienteering course.

As we were more into off-track walking, there came a time that carrying Justine and camping gear on our backs was getting too much while at the same time she was still too young to walk much distance herself. That's when we started doing Metroleague and SOS events.

Then came State Leagues and Easter and Australian Championships to which, we'll add an international twist with Swiss-O-Week during our next visit to our country of birth... That's France not Switzerland!

So why the change of heart particularly now that Justine can walk as well as we do including on multi-day trips?

A great part of it is the social aspect of orienteering. We might spend an hour on the course but we are likely to be at the arena three times as long chatting with others, comparing notes on our courses, refueling from the junior stalls, cheering up for others at the finish or arena run-through... The socialising goes beyond our club or even our state: We regularly have chats with people from Victoria, Tasmania, the ACT or even Canada as was the case at Easter in Tasmania where many orienteers camped at the organized campsite pictured below. Justine and many of the club's juniors have made friends all over the state, Australia and even across the Ditch.





Another aspect is discovering a new region or area. A couple of WHO members do not hesitate to give up on the orienteering on a Sunday in favour of an art gallery or visit to a winery. Emmanuelle, Justine and I use the pretext of a State League weekend in Armidale to stay the week there and visit the many National Parks, do bushwalks and even visit a trout hatchery in the region.

Discovering local eateries is also part of the experience. Before going there for orienteering, I was the only one of us to have visited Orange. It is now a family tradition to stop for Ice cream at Spilt Milk when we go there. There is also an excellent French patisserie nearby and cafes: I did not know French toasts made with Hot Cross buns were a thing until fueling up before the Easter sprint in 2021. We stayed the week after Easter in Orange enjoying the architecture, a quieter pace of life, visiting the gold mining area of Ophir, the karst caves of Borenore, the fish fossils of Canowindra or the natural wonders of Mt Canobolas before heading to Eugowra, another charming town – and nice café- that would not have been on our radars would it not be for orienteering.

Last year we were in Loddon Shire in Victoria for both Easter 3-day and Victorian champs, another

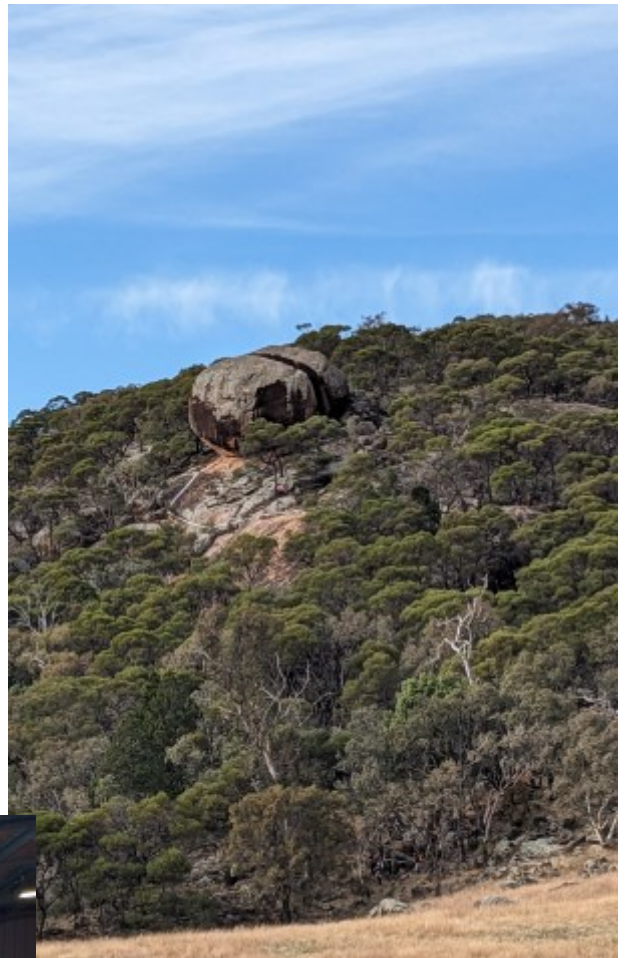
area we would not have thought of visiting. This year's Easter/Australian Champs combination followed by the Tasmanian middle (one of the highlights of my orienteering) and sprint champs were a great excuse to go back to Tassie and visit Maria Island (photos above and on previous page) and MONA as well as staying with old friends who had moved there from Sydney.

There are also the quirks of small towns accommodation and dining: we'll never forget the Fawltly Tower experience at the pub in Nimmitabel or that slightly run-down motel in Muswellbrook; but make sure to visit the bakery in Nimmitabel! On the latest weekend of State League in Cootamundra, the Braidwoods and ourselves had a delicious meal that took about 1.5 hours to reach our table after being ordered and arrived one dish at a time. Not a problem as there was plenty of entertainment and socialising since no less than another two lots of orienteers had time to join our table for a chat and decided not to wait anymore to order and tried their luck elsewhere.

Finally, the bush and the rocks on courses are themselves worth the trip. The sandstone maze of Breakfast Creek near Rylstone, the huge granite slabs of in Victoria or the very impressive split rock from

which we started near Cootamundra are so special that sometimes I forget I am out on the course to look for controls and enjoy the views a bit more than I should.

So why not give a try to orienteering in further away place? The courses are usually much more interesting than what we experience in Sydney and they might not even be the highlights of your weekend. Next State Leagues are on the June Long weekend near Lithgow where they are plenty of things to do and then in August we go to Orange for the NSW school championship. We'll likely have a club dinner for both weekends.



Above photo : Split Rock near Cootamundra.

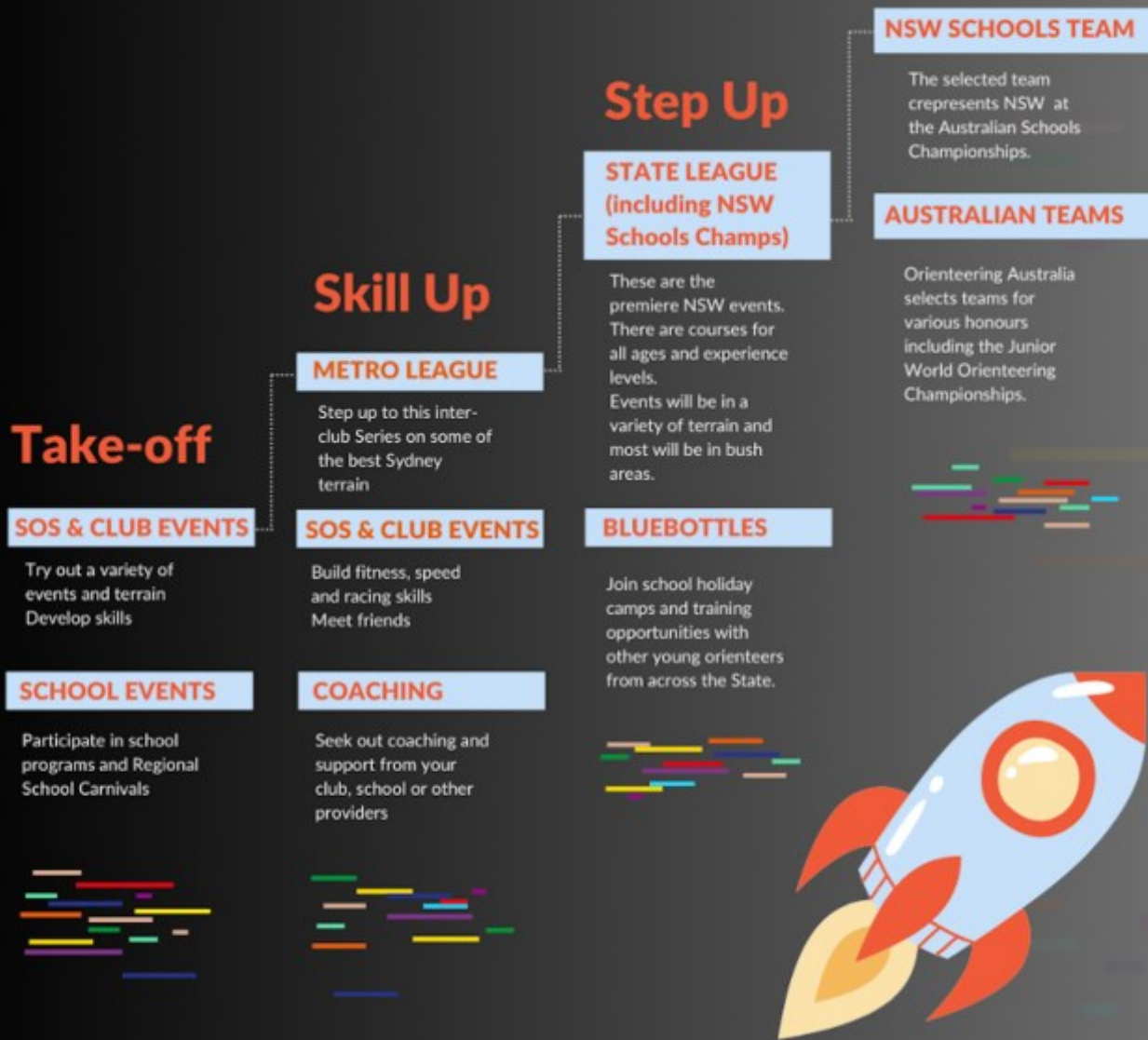
Left: travel to orienteer and you might travel "Back to the Future".

Below: very nice arena at the Tasmania middle Champ.



ORIENTEERING JUNIOR PATHWAY IN SYDNEY

NSW team and beyond



Graphic by Bold Horizons reproduced with permission



Ready To Take Your Orienteering Further?

What are you doing between 26 September and 4 October? Fancy a trip to Canberra for school holidays? Do you want to throw in some orienteering while there?

Orienteering ACT is organising the Oceania Orienteering Championships on both weekends of this period as well as the Australian School Orienteering Championships (ASOC) during the week.

Everyone can enter either in their age category or open easy, open moderate or open hard. Each age category also as a shorter version: look for AS for instance M35AS is for men 35 years old and over on

shorter course than M35A. There are public races run in parallel with the ASOC races and school students not selected in their state teams can enter as independent students. There is even a Development Camp for those who missed out on selection or who did not nominate for their state team. Finally, you can enter any event individually, no need to enter the whole carnival.

Several of our juniors have nominated for the NSW school team that is managed by our very own Saffron and rumour has it that other club members will be at the Development Camp.



Looking further ahead, Easter carnival 2027 will be held in and around Goulburn and WHO is heavily involved with two of the four days. No doubt members' help will be needed on the day. I have heard great things from the map used on these two days.

Again, it might be a national carnival but anyone can enter regardless of fitness or abilities.



Easter and Aus Champ In Tasmania

This year's Easter 3-day carnival incorporated the Australian Championship and therefore the format was a bit different to the usual one. The first day was still a sprint but an official one rather than a prologue for non-elite classes. Best club results were win for Nathan in W12A and third for Justine in W14A. Then we had the middle distance on Saturday followed by the long on Sunday with Justine coming second on both days in W14A. An overall classification was calculated by adding time for all 3 days. One of the tightest finish was in W14A where Justine came third overall only 16 seconds behind

Beatrix (Tas) in first who herself was only 1 second ahead of Layla (ACT) in second: where were these seconds lost over three days?

On Monday it was time for the relay of three runners which include a spectacular mass start. Matt and Vivien's team was third in M35. Don't ask out of how many team. Nathan's team was second in M/W12. In W45, WHO had a member in half of the team that completed their courses with Emmanuelle's team coming in third. Great orienteering, great arenas, great crowd.



Other News Since Last Time

WHO members were spotted in Canberra...



... Sheltered from a storm in Mollong,...



... and sprinted around the WSU in Parramatta



Round 1– Nurragingy

Well we finally got Metro League 2026 underway with Round 1 at Nurragingy, hosted by Big Foot. Unfortunately, your Club Captain fell victim to the flu so had to steer clear, but that certainly didn't prevent a strong showing from WHO on the day! A map with quite a bit of variety, and not too many contours, made for a good start to the season. Let's break down how WHO went on the day.

The WHO-UR-CC division 1 team signalled their intentions with a solid win over last year's champions Garingal, convincingly beating them 31-24. It was very much a team effort, with our fastest being - you guessed it - Seth Sweeney, who picked up 9 points for a time of 34.40. James McQuillan and Matthew Palmer were only a couple of minutes behind, showing our Division 1 squad has a solid core.

Our WHO Division 2 team also didn't disappoint with a 29-25 victory over Big Foot. The newly promoted Ho Lam Marcus Cheung proved he is on the way up, picking up 10 points with a time of 37.43, and in fact the fastest Division 2 time overall - what a way to kick off the season Marcus! But with Nicholas Crass and Lee Coady only a couple of minutes behind, picking up the 9 and 8 points, again we can see a strong Division 2 team that will be hard to beat this season.

Unfortunately, the tables were turned in Division 3, where Big Foot beat WHO 30-24, not helped by the fact we were one person down. Even so, it is worth highlighting the excellent performance of Justine de Remy de Courcelles who picked up 9 points with a time of 42.01.

WHO also struggled in Division 4, where we were beaten by Garingal 33-22. However, Tiffany Palmer was our stand out, picking up 8 points with a very fast time of 34.36.

We were well and truly back in the winners circle in Division 5, with WHO absolutely thrashing a diminished UR-CC 39-6. This year's Division 5 squad has a strong representation of up and coming juniors and I think will be one of the teams to watch this season. Blake Read took the honours (and the fastest time for the whole division) with an incredible time of 22.39 for 10 points. But frankly, everyone in the

team put in a fast time - Toby, Nathan, Levi, and Elliot - when 30.38 is the slowest time in the team, you know we are going to be hard to beat. I can see quite a bit of internal rivalry developing between these boys during the season - bring it on!

We couldn't quite get there against Garingal in Division 6, going down 35-20. An up and coming junior known as Barry Hanlon picked up our best best time of 41.11 for a very useful 6 points. He might have a future in this league.

Not a bad start to the season for WHO, but there is plenty more Metro League action to come.

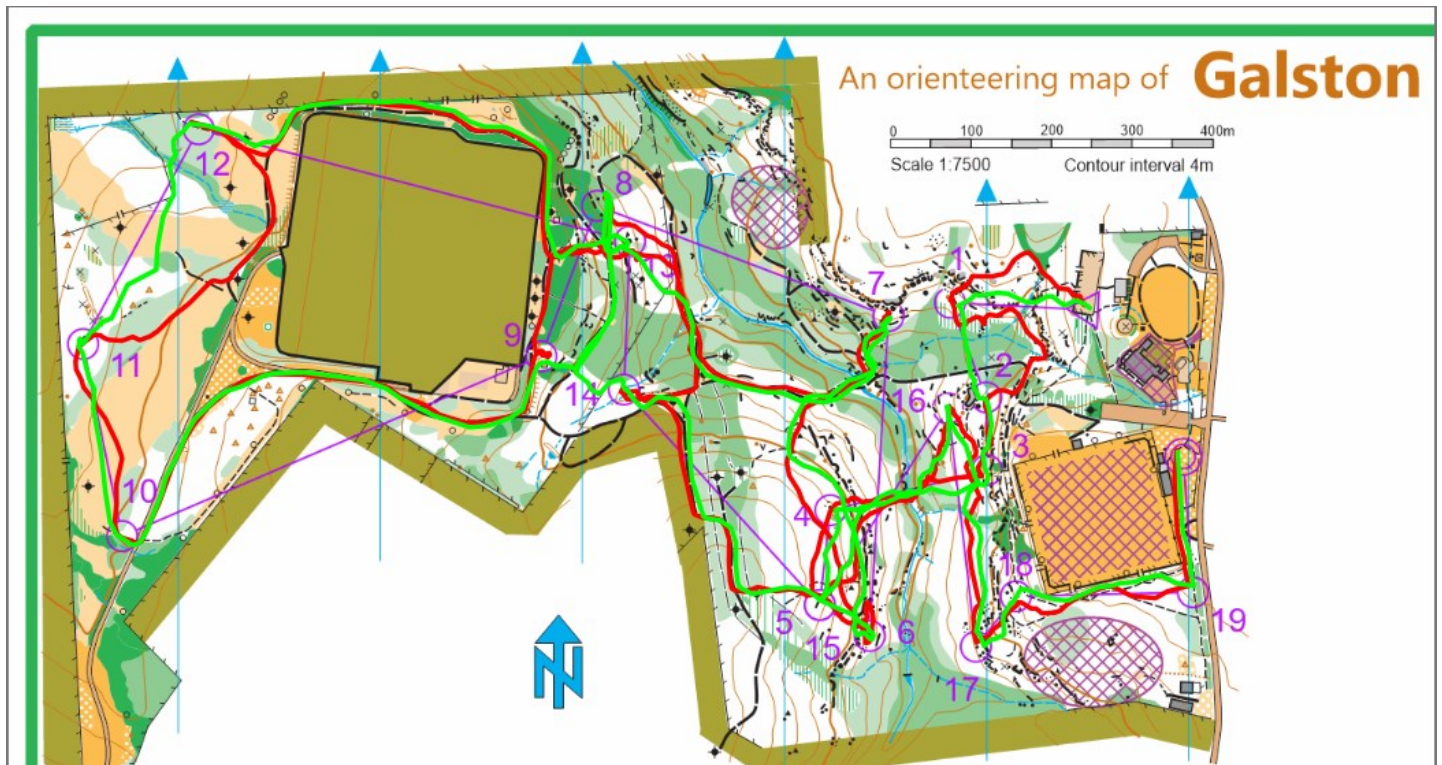
Round 2 - Galston Reserve

Garingal hosted Round 2 at Galston Reserve, and we were fortunate to have good weather and some challenging courses. Many were faced with the conundrum 'do I go clockwise or anticlockwise around the electrical substation' and often it didn't make a whole lot of difference in the end. Let's size up how WHO performed on the day.

The WHO-UR-CC Div 1 team, despite featuring a strong line up, wasn't able to match the firepower of SHOO-IKO this round, who took us out 36-19. Seth Sweeney was our fastest picking up 8 points with a time of 48.59. This means we, along with every other team in Division 1, has won 1 out of 2 rounds this year, indicating that this could be one of the closest Div 1 seasons for a long time. Unfortunately, on points difference, we are at the bottom of the 4 - but some wins should turn that around for us quickly

It was a happier outcome in Div 2, where we beat GO-UR-CC 32-23. Div 2 legend Lee Coady picked up the 10 points with a time of 51.54. Son Lachlan was the next best with 7 points for 63.27. And a shout out to Justine de Remy de Courcelles who stepped up a gear to take on Div 2 for the first time this round - and didn't disappoint picking up a very handy 6 points for 69.42. That's 2 out of 2 wins for WHO so far this season, putting us equal top of the ladder with GO Dragons.

Division 3 was quite literally down to the wire, resulting in a 27-27 draw between WHO and Garingal. Emmanuelle Convert stood head and shoulders



above the rest with a fast time of 44.41 for 10 points. Great effort from Paul Sweeney as well, who picked up 8 points for a time of 58.31. This was enough to keep us off the bottom of the ladder, but we have a lot of work to do to improve our prospects this season - fortunately there is still plenty of time to do just that.

We couldn't quite get there against IKO in Div 4, going down 29-25. But there were some great performances, in particular Tiffany Palmer who picked up 10 points for a very fast time of 48.45. Nice work from Levi Coady as well, picking up 8 points for a time of 71.05. Unfortunately we remain winless in Div 4, but there is plenty of time to turn this around.

Div 5 on the other hand is a completely different story. We picked up our second win in a row, this

time against Knox, beating them 30-24. Yet again our team, dominated by juniors, showed some outstanding performances. Toby Said took out the 10 points after whizzing around the course in 48.03, with brother Levi only minutes behind with 9 points for 52.07. This means we are sitting squarely on top of the ladder, and look to be the team to beat this season. But I'd better not get ahead of myself!

Finally, in Div 6, we were outdone by a full strength Bennelong side, going down 36-18. Sylvie Valais was our fastest picking up 8 points for a time of 46.54. Nice work Sylvie! This means we are winless in Div 6 so far, but again plenty of time yet to run this season.

Thanks all for a great turnout at Galston - next round we are hosted by Uringa on May 24th at Bogabilla (Lansdowne). See you all there!



Event Calendar

There are many events all around Australia or even all around our own state of NSW. Rather than listing them all here, we'll focus on our local events as well as State League events. For more check [Eventor](#).

Saturday Orienteering Series (SOS)

Organised on Saturday mornings during school term by the Bold Horizons team including some of WHO's juniors.

13 June	Meadowbank
20 June	Forestville—Davidson Park

NSW State League 2026 Program

State League events are the best bush orienteering in the state as well as a reason to travel to new places. We'll have a club dinner in Lithgow and Orange.

Date	Map	Event Format	Town / Locality
6-8 June	King's Birthday	Middle, Long, Sprint	Lithgow
18 July	Wianamatta Park (WHO event)	NSW Pair Relay	Ropes Crossing
19 July	Mitchell Park	Middle distance	Sydney /Maraylya
15 August	NSW School champ	Middle distance	Orange
16 August	NSW School Champ	Sprint	Orange
12 September	Tuckland SF	NSW Middle Champ	Dunedoo
13 September	Tuckland SF	NSW Long Champ	Dunedoo

Metroleague and Other

The Interclub team events with courses ranging from easy to hard in Division 6 to 1. The best way to start bush orienteering.

28 June	Pennant Hills
4 July	Turkey Trot—WHO's famous multi map event. South Turrumurra
26 July	Grays Point
6 September	Glenbrook (WHO is organising)