

# South African Orienteering Federation

## Annual Report



## President's Report

In my mind the 2015/16 orienteering year has been challenging and we have experienced some disappointments, but we've also been afforded some exciting new opportunities. It has been sad to see the Durban Orienteering Club closing down and elsewhere we have noted other member clubs needing to consolidate. It has also been sad to witness the decline in MTB O activity. We certainly hope that on both of these fronts better times lie ahead.

On a more pleasing note, the third Big 5 orienteering event was hosted at the end of 2015 and the dawn of the new year. The dedicated organising team put on an excellent event in some great new areas. For the 4<sup>th</sup> edition the event will relocate to the Haenertsburg area of Limpopo and we look forward to a bigger and better event at the end of 2017.

Two new projects started in 2016 offer great promise and opportunity. The first is the *SA Schools Mapping Project* and the second is *World Orienteering Day*. The SA Schools Mapping project has the ambitious aim to provide an orienteering map of all 26000+ schools in South Africa. Already more than 70 schools have been mapped and the project has identified clusters of keen schools that have shown an appetite for more. World Orienteering Day was the brainchild of the IOF Development team. This event offers us a great opportunity to really spread the word about Orienteering around South Africa. We are sure that we can learn from our efforts in 2016 and use World Orienteering Day to greater impact in 2017.

The start of 2016 saw the SAOF host a well-attended strategy session. The participants arrived at a good assessment of the challenges facing the growth of orienteering with a number of different perspectives being aired. Many good ideas were discussed and we now hope to see some of those ideas translated into action.

So although 2015/16 had its disappointments there are many reasons to remain optimistic and strengthen our resolve to persevere in areas we've experienced success and to continue to find and try out new ideas. As always the SAOF will support clubs in their efforts to attract and retain more active orienteers to our wonderful sport.

As we enter into our next five year cycle to the year 2020, I look forward to working with you all as to achieve the goals we set for ourselves at our 2016 strategy session.

.

---

Garry Morrison  
President SAOF  
September 2016

## Membership & Participation

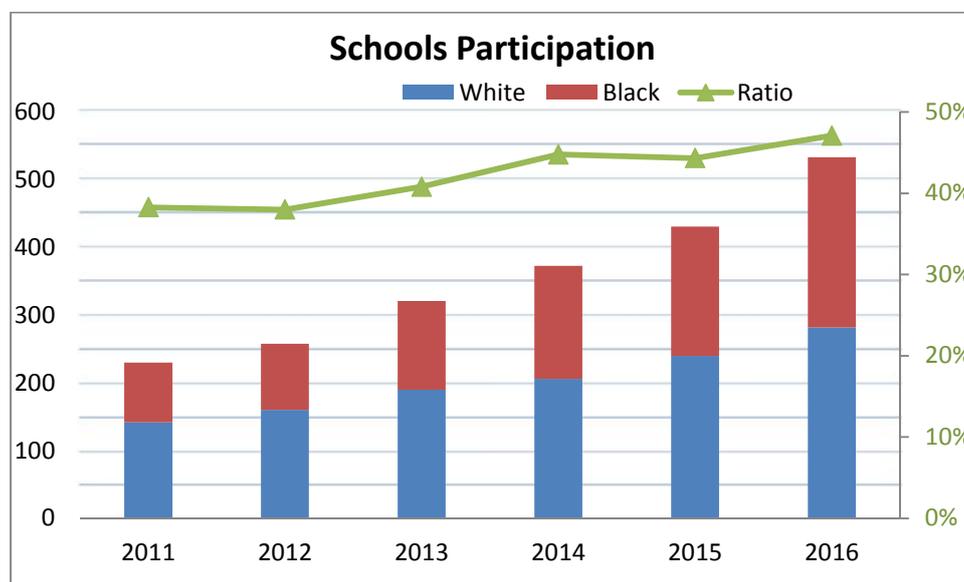
### Clubs

It is sad to report that the Durban Orienteering Club has proven to be unsustainable. After nearly five years of effort and despite numerous activities aimed at equipping the local orienteers with the necessary skills the club ceased to be active in 2016. Once again this illustrates the challenges associated with developing new sustainable clubs.

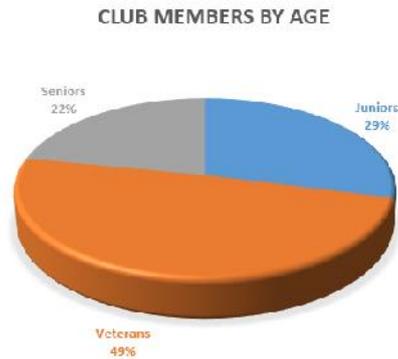
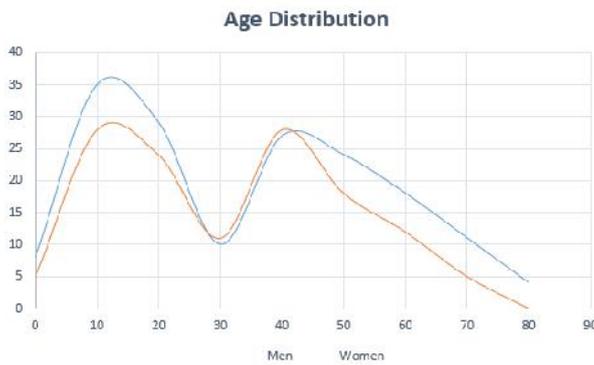
### Membership

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
SENIOR MEN	157	149	166	130	124
SENIOR WOMEN	96	103	118	90	98
JUNIOR MEN	44	49	63	50	48
JUNIOR WOMEN	44	50	48	34	42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>312</b>
<b>PDI MEMBERSHIP</b>	11	18	54	33	42
	3%	5%	14%	11%	13%
<b>CLUBS</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>

Although the number of active clubs has decreased by one over the past year, membership appears to have stabilised after the large drop in numbers in 2015. It is hoped that clubs will continue to find ways to attract and retain new members.

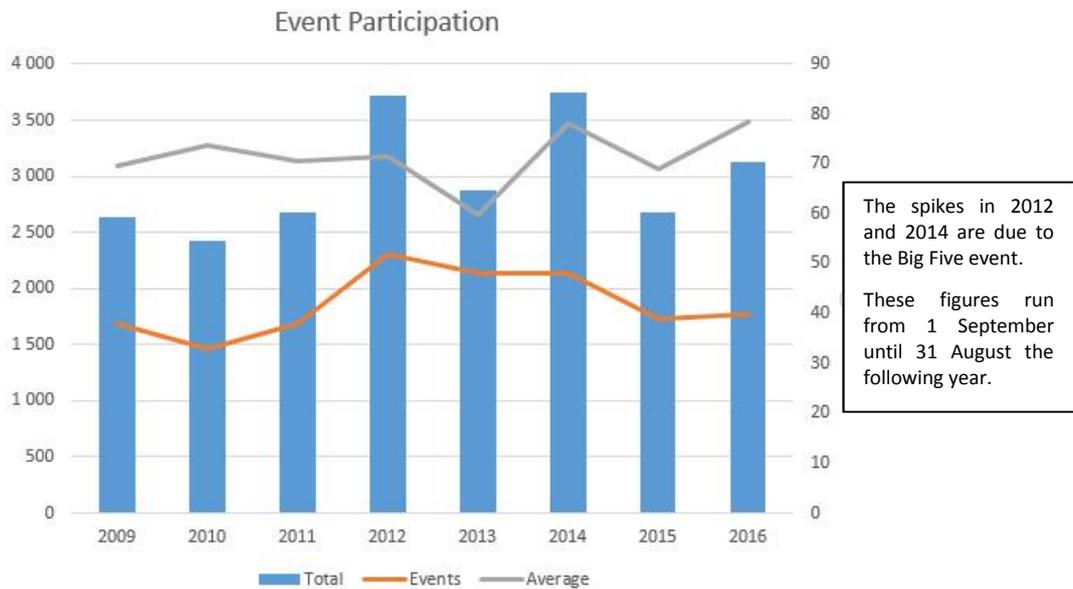


Participation in schools leagues continues to grow, particularly in Guateng. There have also been good participation levels at our Polokwane club's event, which mainly attract school children. Although the 2015 Checkpoint Challenge schools league was not run in 2016, the NW Johannesburg league had record participation levels. As ever there is a good balance between female and male participation at the schools event.



## Participation

The trend in participation levels at official club events over the past 8 years is illustrated in the figure below. Once again it appears that fewer events have been hosted 2016, although average participation levels are at a high. As before, these statistics do not include less formal events. It is from this base that we can see that the SAOF's 2020 goals of 10 000 total runs and a single event with over 500 participants will be a challenge.



## Activities & Achievements

### **Strategy 2016-2020**

In mid-January 2016, the SAOF hosted a strategy session at SASCOC House in Johannesburg. The aim of the session was to review our strategy for the period 2016-2020. Although the strategy session focussed mainly on detailed discussions of how to attract and retain participants to the sport, the meeting did close with a clear set of long-term objectives. These are:



- 10000 Runs annually at Orienteering Events
- 750 SAOF members
- Active Member clubs in 6 Provinces
- A single event with more than 500 Participants
- Year-on-year improvement in participants mirroring SA demographics
- Year-on-year improvement in club membership mirroring SA demographics
- First Woman A-final qualification. Men regularly qualifying for A-finals (JWOC or WOC)

The new strategy will be presented formally to our membership at the 2016 AGM.

### **LTPD and the SA Coach Framework**

The SASCOC led South African Coach Framework (SACF) project aims to develop a unified coaching pathway with consistent standards for all sports in South Africa. This will result in the formation of a professional body for coaching in South Africa. The SAOF has been an active and valued member of this project since its inception in 2011.



The SAOF team of Coach Commission chair Tania Wimberley, SAOF President Garry Morrison and latterly VP Development Karen Chambers have attended two workshop meetings and a one-on-one meeting with the SASCOC project team. The SAOF has submitted its Willing, Ready and Able (WRA) assessment indicating our readiness and level of involvement.

At these various meetings and by means of our written submissions the SAOF has been vocal in its concern that some of the proposals around the implementation of the SACF will be detrimental for the smaller sports in South Africa. Specifically the project proposes that it become legislated that only licensed coaches are allowed to coach in South Africa. Although the SASCOC project team has given assurance on multiple occasions that the implementation of the framework will be adapted to the needs of small as well as big sports, the SAOF team will continue to engage on this matter.

One achievement of note was the delivery of our first Assistant Coach (Level 1) course in September 2015. The course was facilitated by Tania Wimberley and resulted in the qualification of four new Assistant Coaches.

We aim to continue the work to develop the rest of our coaching qualifications. We hope to make progress on the Apprentice Coach qualification during the upcoming year.

## Mapping

The main activity in the mapping domain in this period was undertaken as part of the SA Schools Mapping project which is discussed in the section on Development. As part of that project, architect of the project hosted a well-attended introductory mapping course. Since the SA Schools Mapping project aims to provide maps of schools using only Google Earth and Streetview imagery, the course was focussed on how this can be done.

As part of the SAOF's Strategic Maps concept, the SAOF plans to provide funding for the upcoming SA champs maps as well as the next Big Five O event.

## EMIT System

The SAOF constantly monitors the health of the EMIT cards and bricks. A number of the cards have begun failing and hence the SAOF has plans to supplement our existing EMIT card stocks with a new series.

The SAOF will also introduce a clear warranty condition that will accompany the purchase of any new EMIT cards by club members. The warranty aims to make two things clear to individuals purchasing an EMIT card. The first is that they do not pay the full cost of the card. That the SAOF is able to subsidise the EMIT cards is due in part to the fact that the SAOF is a recognised sporting body in South Africa and as such we receive an annual grant from the Department of Sport and Recreation. The second aim of the warranty is to clear the conditions under which it will be possible to replace a faulty EMIT card should it fail prematurely.

## Administration

The role of the Administration portfolio is to transform the SAOF into a more efficient and effective organisation. With the recent constitutional amendments the SAOF has successfully registered as a non-profit organisation (NPO) with the Department of Social Development. On an annual basis this requires the SAOF to submit various reports to the Department.

## Systems

It has become clear to the SAOF management committee the cloud-based membership database system has not been embraced by Member clubs. It remains a challenge to obtain membership details from some of our clubs. This is important from two perspectives. Accurate membership information ensures that only eligible orienteers are able to participate on championship courses at Provincial and National championships. Accurate membership statistics are a crucial part of our reporting to the Department of Sport and Recreation, which ensures that we continue to enjoy the recognition as an official sport and access to an annual grant which is crucial to our efforts to administer and grow the sport in South Africa.

## Insurance

One of the substantial benefits of Membership of the SAOF is that we obtain *Event Liability Insurance* (required by law) covering all events run by Member clubs that are listed on the calendar. Many forest land-owners are requiring such insurance with increasingly large cover, especially in the case of fire.

## Finance & Funding

We continue to rely heavily on SRSA to fund much of our efforts to grow Orienteering in South Africa. Whilst these funds are most welcome and have enabled us to run a number of important projects, the reduced size of the grant and delays with the timing of the grant allocation continue to remind us of the dangers of being over-reliant on this source of income.

During the period between the SRSA year start (1 April) and the signing of the SLA (service level agreement) with SRSA, the SAOF has to tread cautiously as our own funds are limited. Without longer-term funding it will be difficult for the SAOF to plan longer-term and implement projects with longer time horizons. We will continue to seek ways to overcome this challenging situation.

## NLDTF

Spending against our 2011 lottery grant (Project No. 46720) was completed in 2016. We are in the process of completing our final report on the projects associated with this grant and we aim to submit the final documentation before the end of 2016. This will enable us to submit a funding application at the next call. The availability and changing conditions associated with this source of funds means that NLDTF funding cannot be relied upon on a regular basis.

## SRSA

The SRSA grant period runs from 1 April to 31 March of the following year. The 2016/17 grant has unfortunately been reduced compared to the previous year (R300 000 versus R400 000 previously). The SAOF signed the SLA (service level agreement) for the 2016/17 grant on the 27 August 2016. Although the grant is reduced compared to last year, the challenge remains that the grant must be spent by 31 March 2017.



**sport & recreation**

Department:  
Sport and Recreation South Africa  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Notwithstanding the challenges imposed by the long delays in the process by which we are allocated a SRSA grant and funds are approved, there are notable constraints on the types of projects that we fund through this channel. It is correct, of course, that these government funds must be spent on projects that are aligned with government priorities and SRSA's national sport and recreation plan (2012).

The biggest constraint that this has imposed over the past year is that SRSA funds cannot be used to support our senior HP athletes. The SAOF has utilised its own funds to support our senior HP athletes where required.

## Own Funds

During the period 1 April to end-August the SAOF has used its own funds to support the continuation of a number of crucial Expansion and Development projects. It is imperative that we find ways to boost our income from sources other than SRSA and the NLDTF.

## Development

A major focus area for the SAOF will continue to be the implementation of our Expansion Plan designed to develop and grow the sport in South Africa. The project seeks to find the balance between supporting growth in our traditional orienteering centres with exporting orienteering to new areas. A number of projects are supported under this portfolio.

## SA Schools Mapping Project

This is a new project that was started in 2015. The ambitious aim is to provide every school in South Africa with an orienteering map of their school. The map can be used as a resource for teaching map-work in geography and decision-making in Life Orientation. The initial phase of this project has been used as a targeting device to identify keen people. It has thus far provided a promising way to enable us to identify clusters of schools that could be targeted with a view to establishing a Schools League via the Expansion Plan.

We aim to develop and modify this project as we learn more about using it as a mechanism to identify people who have the passion to help us establish orienteering in their areas.

## World Orienteering Day

In 2016, the IOF introduced World Orienteering Day as a high-profile, global way to raise the profile of Orienteering. The SAOF took part in this event on the 11<sup>th</sup> May. South Africa contributed with 1124 participants taking part in an orienteering activity at one of 14 venues around the country. We contributed to a new world record with over 252 900 people from 81 countries and territories taking part in an orienteering activity at over 2000 venues around the globe. The SAOF believes that this IOF initiative provides the orienteering community in South Africa with a great vehicle to market orienteering to a wider audience.



## Limpopo

The Polokwane club based in the Lebowakgomo area of Limpopo continues in its mission to make orienteering a major sport in Limpopo. The club continues to explore ways to grow orienteering in their community. A number of achievements and highlights are listed below:

- A Level 1 Coaching Course was hosted in the Lebowakgomo area in September 2015. Three POC members and one RACO member successfully received their L1 coaching qualification.
- A number of POC members attended the 2015/16 Big 5 O event held in the Kaapsehoop area.
- Three POC athletes attended the 2016 high-performance training camp. One of the newly qualified L1 coaches joined the coaching staff to shadow them and hence gain experience.
- In addition to hosting a number of successful club events, POC teamed up with the Zebediela running club to host the Lebowakgomo mini-marathon. This great effort by the POC team saw them learn a great deal about event hosting.
- A number of new school maps were produced.
- Ephraim and his team of assistants provided some support to a number of schools in the Capricorn district, following-up on his workshops presented in 2015. .

## KZN

After a four year effort coordinated by Peter Hemer, supported by his son Dylan who lives in Durban, our attempts to establish a sustainable club in KZN have failed. We have been unable to identify sufficient local orienteers locally to keep the club active without Peter and Dylan's efforts. It is hoped that sometime in the future it will be possible to breathe life back into DOC.

## Schools Leagues

Unfortunately the Check-point challenge league that was piloted in Eastern Johannesburg in 2015 did not take place in 2016. The original project manager was not available to run it in 2016 and it was not possible to find a replacement in time. The main challenge appears to be that of getting teachers at the various participating schools to play a more active role in the coordination of the league. Although one of the aims of the new format was to find a format that required less involvement of experienced orienteers to run, it is clear that it will take a multi-year effort



We aim to continue to explore ways to support and encourage the introduction of schools leagues into new areas.

## Major Events

### Big Five O

The third instalment of the Big Five O event took place at the end of 2015. The organisers continue to make this event better with each instalment. That they are on the right track was evidenced by some glowing words of praise from some of world orienteering's luminaries. Whilst it was slightly disappointing to note that the number of participants was similar to the previous event, the SAOF will continue to support the organisers to grow the event into the flagship orienteering event in South Africa. It is important for the long-term sustainability of this event and for the sport in South Africa as a whole that we all work towards increasing the levels of local participation.



The SAOF once again was able to create opportunities for participants from previously disadvantaged communities to experience the fantastic orienteering experience that this event presents. The support of a number of Swiss Orienteers in this regard is gratefully acknowledged.

### SA Champs

After publishing a proposed schedule for the hosts of coming SA orienteering championships the SAOF were approached by PenOC who informed us that they were entering a consolidation phase and as such would be unable to host the SA championships in 2017. RACO kindly stepped into the breach and agreed to host the 2017 championships. The revised schedule for the coming years is:

Year	Club
2016	ROC
2017	RACO
2018	PenOC
2019	ROC
2020	RACO

A similar schedule for the SA Sprint championships does not yet exist. The intention is that the current approach will continue. That is, the hosts of either the Western Cape or Gauteng Provincial championships will incorporate the SA Sprint championships into their event. The SAOF will continue to facilitate the negotiation between the possible candidates on an annual basis.

### **WRE's**

The value of World Ranking Events to South African orienteering will be discussed at this year's AGM. By the end of this year's SA championships we will have hosted 11 WRE's. These events cost the SAOF EUR250 per event in sanction fee to the IOF. Where these events attract additional elite orienteers it may be possible to offset this cost. However, with the exception of the Big Five event, the WRE status of our events has not attracted additional entrants.

With these facts in mind the SAOF management committee will propose that we no longer apply to host WREs. The only exception would be for the Big Five event where the WRE status is potentially beneficial. We aim to find other mechanisms to ensure that the quality standards associated with WREs are reached for SAOF sanctioned events.

## **High Performance**

### **Anti-Doping**

Dr. Richard Raine accepted the request to act as the SAOF's Medical Liaison. He has also reviewed our anti-doping policies and the updated policy now appears on the SAOF website.

### **IOF**

The IOF have introduced an Athlete's license. This is part of their drive to take anti-doping more seriously. Although orienteering is viewed as a low-risk sport, the Athlete license requires World Cup and WOC athletes to sign an anti-doping agreement. The license costs EUR 30, which the athlete is required to pay. Fortunately, smaller orienteering nations benefit in that their first 3 athletes' have the fee waived.

### **Foot O**

Two HP training camps were hosted in 2016. A local camp was held in the Kaapsehoop area of Mpumalanga. This is a big camp with 19 athletes from the SAOF Youth, Junior, Senior and Development squads. Once again this camp was only possible thanks to the planning of our national coach and the support of a four other qualified coaches. The camp was held on high-quality maps in good technical terrain. All the maps have been used in the past two Big Five events and most were funded under the SAOF's strategic maps strategy.

The second camp was an international camp held in Sweden, organised by national coach Tania Wimberley. This camp was focused on the Youth squad, which is made up of young orienteers who have the potential to perform well on the international stage in the future.

Prior to the commencement of the 2016 HP season, the HP strategic plan was reviewed. The evidence, based on our historical and recent performances on the world stage continues to support the hypothesis that improved elite performances will only be possible with exposure of younger orienteers to high-quality training opportunities in technical terrain. We aim to repeat the Youth tour every two years, if possible.

A team of 4 men and 2 women represented SA at JWOC held in Switzerland. For four of the athletes this was their first JWOC experience. A number of notable performances were achieved. For the experienced athletes it remains a challenge to surpass historical best-ever performances and it seems clear that more experience is needed in these environments. Timothy Chambers' first leg relay run certainly shows what is possible. The first-time participants performed as expected and it is hoped that this experience will motivate them to strive for better performances. Excellent performances were achieved by Christie Courtnage in her first JWOC, although her experiences on previous youth tours has clearly been beneficial.

We only had a single male participant, representing SA at WOC held in Sweden. This remains an expensive exercise for any aspirant senior athlete as the SAOF is unable to provide much financial support. The time of year is also a challenge for SA participants as it often falls outside of university holidays. This is especially true for our more promising senior athletes.

## Conclusion

As can be seen from this annual report orienteering in South Africa continues to be a small, but energetic sport. We recognise that this past year has served up its own mix of challenges, disappointment and opportunity. However, we should take heart from all the projects that have been run last year and the preceding years. We should recognise that we have made substantial progress over the past five years.

As a sport we are not unique in the challenges that we face. We also find that these challenges are common across many orienteering nations. So let us learn from each other and grab our opportunities when they come along to strengthen and grow orienteering in South Africa.