

# South African Orienteering Federation

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**Annual**

**Report**

**2017**



***Development, Growth, Excellence***

## President's Report

While reading this year's annual report it is evident that a huge effort has been put into our Expansion and Development activities. These projects, managed by our VPs of Development and Marketing have built on many initiatives run from the centre over the past number of years. We should be justifiably proud of these projects as they have delivered year-on-year growth in participation levels and provided access to orienteering to many new participants from all walks of South African society.

What has been disappointing, however, is that our established clubs have not been as energetic in their own growth initiatives and have not sought to piggy-back on the SAOF's efforts. Sometimes it feels to me that our established clubs are outsourcing growth and development efforts to the SAOF.

The lack of integration between the SAOF's efforts and the efforts at a club level is disappointing. However, rather than point fingers and find others to blame, I have counselled to the SAOF management committee to look at what we can do better to foster a more effective integration of effort.

The SAOF management committee has recognised that we need to find better ways to reach out to clubs and encourage them to work with us. By the same token I am reaching out to clubs and asking them to seek opportunities to work with us for the benefit of all orienteers in South Africa, present and future.

Garry Morrison  
President SAOF  
September 2017

## Membership & Participation

### Clubs

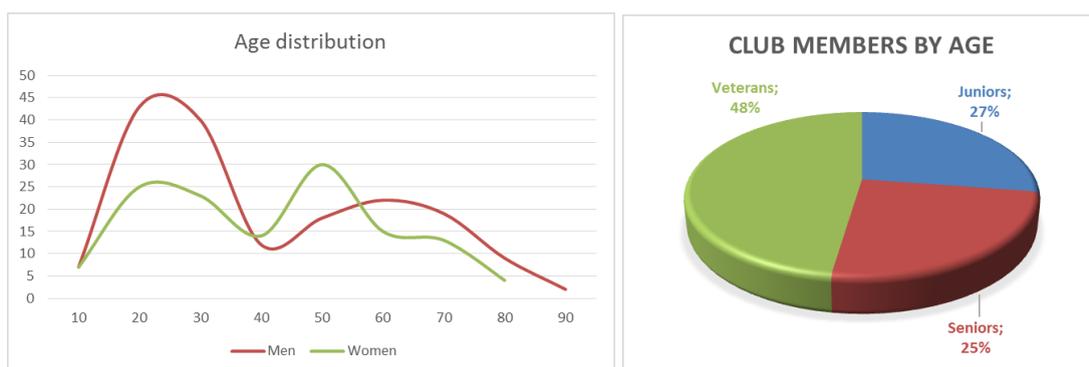
Following on from the closure of the Durban Orienteering Club in 2016, it is disappointing to see the demise of the two more clubs (AR Club and Tuks-O) in Gauteng in 2017. This is evidence that it is very difficult to sustain a fully-functioning orienteering club with only a few active members. It serves as a reminder to all clubs that they need to find ways to grow and spread the heavy load associated with putting on a full calendar of events. The SAOF is again reminded of the challenges associated with developing new sustainable clubs. It is for this reason that our strategy relies heavily on identifying keen people who “pull” for more support from the SAOF.

### Membership

Although the number of active clubs has again decreased over the past year, membership appears to have stabilised at a lower level than in the recent past. Clubs are encouraged to find new and innovative ways to attract new members and retain existing members.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
SENIOR MEN	154	149	157	149	166	163	128	137
SENIOR WOMEN	114	114	96	103	118	104	102	106
JUNIOR MEN	56	58	44	49	63	59	50	58
JUNIOR WOMEN	50	51	44	50	48	31	44	41
TOTAL	374	372	341	351	395	357	324	342
PDI MEMBERSHIP	10	5	11	18	54	33	40	56
	3%	1%	3%	5%	14%	9%	12%	16%
CLUBS	6	6	8	8	8	9	8	6

Although the gender profile of our women club membership dropped slightly from 45% in 2016 to 43% in 2017, the good gender balance remains one of the strengths of orienteering. This is viewed favourably by SRSA which seeks to support sport and recreation that attracts both men and women.



There has been a significant drop in senior men members which has also resulted into less competitive events in the Open Age Group.

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The graphs above, which summarise the age distribution of our membership, are clear evidence that Orienteering truly is a *Sport for Life*. It is clear that a challenge facing all clubs is to attract and retain younger members.

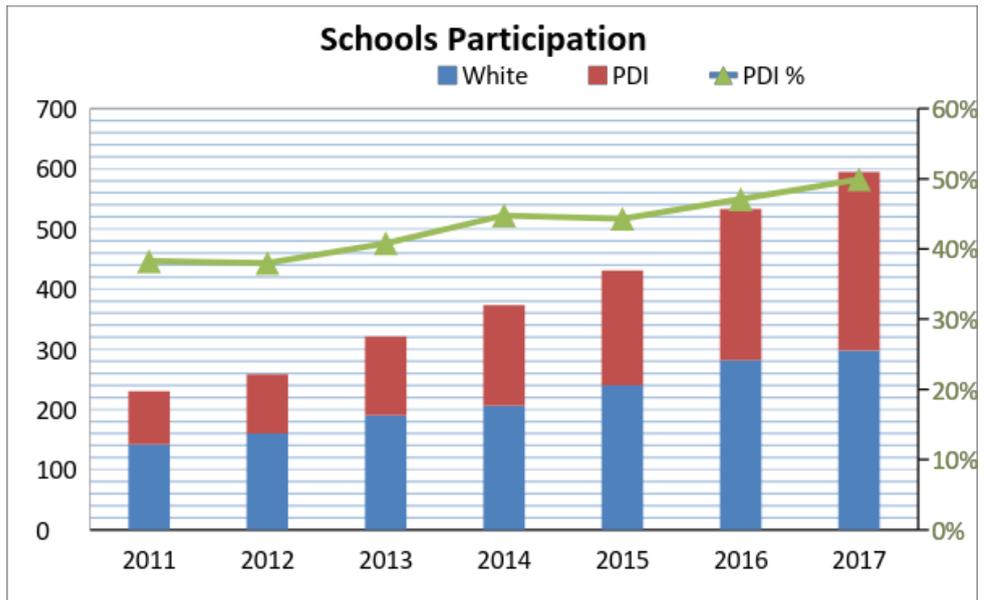
### Participation

The trend in participation levels at official club events over the past 9 years is illustrated in the figure below. Although there has been an increase in the number of events have been hosted in 2017, the average participation levels have declined.



Participation in the Gauteng schools league continues to grow. Although there have been no other official schools leagues outside of Gauteng, there continues to be good participation levels at the Polokwane club’s events, which mainly attract school children. As ever there is a good balance between female and male participation at the schools events and good representation across the demographic groups in South Africa.

Combining the club participation numbers with the schools participation numbers and including participation at World Orienteering Day events paints a rosier picture. What is more concerning though is that club event participation levels are not growing compared to initiatives driven from a national level. This is a cause for concern and suggests that the SAOF’s 2020 goals of 10 000 total runs and a single event with over 500 participants will be challenging to achieve.



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## Activities & Achievements

### **Strategy 2016-2020**

The SAOF strategy for the next 5-year period was adopted at the 2016 AGM. All members are encouraged to visit the SAOF website and download the full document. Here follows a short summary.

***Vision:***            ***To make Orienteering a vibrant, national sport accessible to all South Africans***

***Mission:***            ***Development Growth Excellence***

These statements encapsulate the intent of our strategy. They reflect the belief that in order to grow the sport, development and roll-out of education pathways are required to reduce the inherent *barriers to entry*. Our mission also recognises that excellence, which includes being internationally competitive at the highest level, will not be possible without the foundation of development and growth of the participation base of our sport in all communities within South Africa.

Based on our experience over the preceding five years we believe that the correct approach to grow the sport in new areas is comprised of three steps. These steps apply equally to clubs wishing to grow their membership base. The three steps are:

#### ***Expose lots of new people to the sport***

We need to continue to provide opportunities to make more people aware of our sport. The more people we can introduce to Orienteering, the greater the chance we have of finding those people who will become truly passionate about the sport.

#### ***Identify people who show passion***

Out of all the people that we expose to the sport we need find ways to identify those people who will become truly passionate about the sport. These are the people that “pull” for more. They are proactive in seeking more help and more information. We have learned that putting effort and resources into people who do not “pull” is invariably wasted.

#### ***Provide support***

Once we have found these people who are passionate about orienteering, we need to provide support in whatever form it is needed. This could be in the form of education opportunities, provision of materials, participation opportunities, recognition of their efforts, etc.

### **2020 Goals**

- 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



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- First Woman A-final qualification. Men regularly qualifying for A-finals (JWOC or WOC)

### **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, the Coaching Association of South Africa (CASA) for coaching in South Africa. The SAOF has been an active and valued member of this project since its inception in 2011.



During the course of 2016/17 the SAOF team of Coach Commission chair Tania Wimberley and SAOF President Garry Morrison were less involved in activities around this project. Their main involvement has been the submission in November 2016 of a document, developed with inputs from a number of other smaller sports, on the anticipated negative impact of CASA on smaller sports.

We still believe that legislation that permits only licensed coaches to practise as coaches in South Africa will impact negatively on small sports. The SAOF team will continue to engage on this matter.

An achievement to note is the delivery of our second Assistant Coach (Level 1) course in August 2017 in Cape Town. The course was facilitated by Tania Wimberley. The assessment progress is underway.

Our VP Development, Karen Chambers, continues to adapt and refine the material that is required for a successful *Introduction to Orienteering* course.

### **Mapping**

The SA Schools Mapping project is discussed under Development.

Under the SAOF's Strategic Maps plan, the SAOF has funded the mapping for the SA Champs 2016 and 2017. In addition we have funded a number of the Big Five O maps in Kaapsehoop as well as the maps to be used in the next Big Five O event. The Kaapsehoop maps have been used for the two most recent High Performance training camps as well as for a number of club events. The 2016 SA Champs maps were used for the 2017 Gauteng Champs and this year's SA Champs maps will be used for the 2018 Gauteng Champs.

This substantial investment in maps is critical to promote all aspects of orienteering in South Africa. We do, however, recognise that our strategy is not meant to replace mapping undertaken by and funded by clubs.

### **EMIT System**

The SAOF supplemented our existing EMIT card stocks with a new series in September 2016. We will continue to monitor the health of the electronic timing systems together with the clubs that use the equipment.

In 2016 the SAOF introduced a clear warranty that accompanies the purchase of any new EMIT cards by club members. The warranty makes it clear that an EMIT card purchase is subsidised by the SAOF. This subsidy is due 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. In addition the

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warranty spells out 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.

The SAOF is a registered non-profit organisation (NPO) with the Department of Social Development. To maintain our NPO status we are compelled to submit various reports to the department on an annual basis.

In addition, our grant from the Department of Sport and Recreation (SRSA), requires us to send progress reports on a quarterly basis.

## **Systems**

We wish to encourage Member clubs to submit accurate membership lists timeously. This is important from two perspectives. 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. In addition, accurate membership information ensures that only eligible orienteers are able to participate on championship courses at Provincial and National championships.

## **Insurance**

Clubs are reminded that the SAOF obtains an annual *Event Liability Insurance* (required by law) covering all events run by Member clubs that are listed on the calendar. Many forest land-owners require such insurance with increasingly large cover, especially in the case of fire.

The SAOF Administration is currently exploring other options for this insurance with the aim to ensure that we obtain the best cover possible at a competitive premium.

## **Finance & Funding**

We continue to rely heavily on SRSA to fund our efforts to grow Orienteering in South Africa. These funds are most welcome and have enabled us to run a number of important projects. Our ability to complete our funded projects, demonstrate good governance and submit the required progress reports are crucial to ensure that we continue to enjoy continued financial support from SRSA.

There continues to be a long delay between the start of the SRSA grant period (1 April), the signing of the SLA (service level agreement) with SRSA and the receipt of our grant (typically November). During this period the SAOF is required to use its own money to fund the projects. Without longer-term funding it is 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**

We do not currently have an active NLDTF grant. Recent changes to their distribution conditions means that there will be a cool-off period of one year before a successful organisation will be allowed to apply for another grant. The availability and changing conditions associated with this source of funds means that NLDTF funding cannot be relied upon on a regular basis.

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## SRSA

The SRSA grant period runs from 1 April to 31 March of the following year. On a positive note the 2017/18 grant has returned to the previous level of R400 000 after a reduction to R300 000 in the previous grant period. The SAOF signed the SLA (service level agreement) for the 2017/18 grant on the 22 August 2017. As always the challenge remains that the grant must be spent by 31 March 2018.



**sport & recreation**

Department:  
Sport and Recreation South Africa  
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There are understandable constraints on the types of projects that we are able to fund through this grant. These are government funds, which must be spent on projects that are aligned with government priorities and SRSA's national sport and recreation plan (2012).

The biggest projects funded by the SRSA grants are the Expansion Plan, Map production and Electronic timing equipment. Not only are these projects critical in expanding our sport and providing access opportunities to rural communities, but they also benefit all active participants.

## Own Funds

During the period between the end of one SRSA grant period (1 April) and payment of the next period's grant-(end October), the SAOF has used its own funds to support the continuation of a number of crucial Development and Mapping projects. It is imperative that we maintain a healthy balance of our own funds such that we are to continue these projects until the grants are paid.

## Development

The implementation of our Expansion Plan continues to be a major focus area of the SAOF. The Expansion Plan is designed to develop and grow the sport in South Africa. We regularly evaluate our efforts with a view to finding the correct balance between supporting growth in our traditional orienteering centres and exporting orienteering to new areas.

A number of projects are supported under this portfolio. Our major challenge remains effective marketing of orienteering to expose as wide an audience as possible. Our website is currently being made more user-friendly and regular emails are now being sent out to the orienteering community.

It has become clear that we need to find ways to work together with existing clubs to ensure a better alignment of our efforts with club efforts to increase participation levels and club membership.

## SA Schools Mapping Project

This project was started in 2015 and the ambitious aim continues to be 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

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introducing orienteering activities into schools and possibly establishing a Schools League via the Expansion Plan.

Thus far 115 new school maps have been made bringing the total number of schools mapped to 175.

We aim to continue 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

The focus of this day presents a great opportunity to market orienteering to a wider audience, especially schools and community groups. This year the number of events held in South Africa increased from 14 to 21 and the number of participants totalled 1950, up from 1124 last year.

We continue to believe that this IOF initiative provides the orienteering community in South Africa with a great vehicle to market orienteering to a wider audience. Next year we hope to have even more schools and possibly community groups like cubs involved. There is talk that the concept might morph into a week-long event so that clubs can include weekend events. The SAOF encourages clubs to find innovative ways to utilise this vehicle to market the sport.



### Limpopo

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

- Through efforts by the club twelve World Orienteering Day events were held throughout the Limpopo province (more than any other province), attracting 768 participants.
- A group of 8 POC athletes participated in the 2016 SA Champs
- POC was invited to attend the Molepo Sport Seminar where orienteering was recognised as a sporting code in the Molepo area. The Mokumong foundation will be supporting Anna Leputu, orienteering chairwoman at Ga-Rampheri, with growing orienteering in that region.
- Recently the SAOF hosted, jointly with POC, a teacher workshop at Anna's school, Subiaco Primary, for all schools in the circuit.
- Three POC athletes were selected for the National Development squad and attended the 2017 high-performance training camp.
- Another group of 8 POC athletes took part in the 2017 GOC Champs.
- POC has held 7 orienteering events over the past year and a number of these events have attracted over 100 competitors.
- Two new park maps and a number of new school maps were produced.
- POC has been invited to assist with the preparations of the 2017/18 Big 5 O Event.
- Both the Polokwane Review newspaper and Thobela FM continue to support POC by sharing updates/orienteering news with their readers and listeners on a regular basis.

The SAOF would once again like to acknowledge the support of the two Swiss Orienteering clubs OLV Zug and OLG Chur for their financial and equipment support towards efforts to grow orienteering in Limpopo.

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## Western Cape

PenOC with the support of the SAOF implemented development project that involved funding a young British elite orienteer and Level 1 coach, Beth Hanson, to come and work in Cape Town as an orienteering development officer over her summer holiday. During her time in the Cape she worked with various schools, cub and scout groups as well as home schoolers in Fish Hoek, Melkbosstrand, Somerset West and Cape Town. She also assisted with and presented club events at Blaauwberg Nature Reserve, Fish Hoek, and the SA Astronomical Observatory. The project was well supported by the local orienteering community and Beth also trained with the local M/W21E Orienteers.

In total Beth exposed over 1000 children and about 50 teachers/ scout leaders to Orienteering. We hope to be able to keep the initiative going in Cape Schools and support PenOC to their efforts to grow the sport in the Cape.

VP Marketing, Richard Lund presented a mapping course in Somerset West which was attended by about 15 interested mappers. On the back of this, local schools were contacted about having their schools mapped, and there is now a list of about 20 schools awaiting mapping.

The SAOF hosted a basic orienteering training workshop with Warnell Engelbrecht, a sports coach who works with schools in the Springbok area of Namaqualand. We provided him with a set of *O in a box* materials to assist him in his efforts.

A Level 1 Orienteering Coaching course was recently presented in Cape Town by national coach and Level 1 facilitator, Tania Wimberley. There were two attendees from PenOC and two from UCTMSC. The SAOF believes that more qualified and active coaches are important to assist efforts to grow and develop the sport. And so we hope the Cape will benefit from having more qualified coaches.

## KZN

At the beginning of the 2017 the SAOF presented two 3-day Orienteering workshops to over 700 Community and School sport coordinators as part of the inaugural KZN Healthy Lifestyles and School Sport workshops. These projects are run by the KZN Department of Sport and Recreation. We are hoping to continue working with the KZN Sports Department to introduce orienteering into local schools and communities.

Cordwalles Primary in Pietermaritzburg currently includes orienteering in their programme and holds an annual orienteering event that other schools are invited to. Pupils at the Wykeham Collegiate will also be introduced to orienteering during Phys Ed. We will continue to support these efforts with the hope that sustainable orienteering will take root in KZN.

## Schools Leagues

This year the Gauteng Schools League had a record number of 14 schools taking part and 381 participants attending at least one of the events.

Although we aim to continue to explore ways to support and encourage the introduction of schools leagues into new areas our main focus is to first introduce pupils to Orienteering during lessons such as Life Orientation, Geography and Physical Education at as many schools as possible.



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## YOC (Young Orienteers Challenge)

The YOC programme has been reintroduced and is again being actively marketed at Gauteng club events. This skills development programme targets primary school children.

## Permanent courses

PenOC have established a permanent course at Khwa-ttu on the West Coast and aim to establish another one at the Blaauwberg Nature reserve.

The SAOF is currently in the process of setting up a permanent course at Oriel Park in Bedfordview using the MOBO cellphone app where one has to use snap scan at each control to show one has visited it. The benefit of this approach is that it is easy to record the number of participants who have visited the permanent course. Should the trial prove successful we will look to establish a number of permanent courses using the app.

## Major Events

### Big Five O

The fourth instalment of the Big Five O event is set to take place in the Limpopo area at the end of 2017. The location of the event was strongly influenced by the promising development which continues in Limpopo. With preparations well underway and a good number of entrants from around the world, the SAOF will continue to support the organising committee where possible.



For this edition of the Big Five O event, the SAOF has provided substantial funds, via our SRSA grant, for the production of the five new maps required. These maps will add to the pool of strategic maps available to the SAOF. Amongst other uses we hope that these maps will be a valuable asset to the development of Orienteering in Limpopo.

The SAOF together with the Big Five Orienteering NPC are making every effort to maximise the participation opportunities for the active o

### SA Champs

The SAOF recognises that the making of new maps each year is an expensive exercise. As such the SAOF is happy to endorse the re-use of maps for future championships.

The schedule, presented to the 2016 AGM, for the hosts of the SA orienteering championships for the next few years has been adjusted. Earlier in 2017, PenOC informed the SAOF that they would be unable to host the 2018 SA Champs. The revised provisional schedule for the coming years is:

Year	Club
2017	RACO
2018	ROC
2019	PenOC
2020	RACO
2021	ROC

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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.

RACO has confirmed that they will host the 2018 SA Sprint championships together with the 2018 Gauteng championships.

## **WREs**

The value of World Ranking Events to South African orienteering was discussed at last year's AGM. Numerous factors were considered including the cost and quality of events and it was decided that we will no longer apply to host WREs. The only exception would be for the Big Five event where the WRE status is potentially beneficial. We will aim to find other mechanisms to ensure that the quality standards associated with WREs are reached for SAOF sanctioned events

After the abovementioned decision, the SAOF informed the IOF in November 2016 that the anticipated benefits to the SAOF of hosting World Ranking Events did not justify the EUR 250 sanctioning fee. The IOF acknowledged our submission which was discussed at a foot orienteering commission meeting later that year.

On 1 September 2017, all members of the IOF were informed of new rules regarding WREs and their sanctioning fees for 2018. The fee for the smallest orienteering nations is now EUR 1 per entrant with a minimum fee of EUR40 and a maximum of EUR 200 per event.

In light of this the SAOF will decide, during the course of the 2017/18 season, whether or not it should review its position on WREs.

## **High Performance**

### **Athlete's License**

The IOF introduced the Athlete license in 2016 for athletes participating in World Cup and senior World championship events. The athlete license costs EUR30 and the athlete is required to sign an anti-doping agreement. Previously, smaller orienteering nations received 3 free athletes' licenses. This fell away in 2017. The SAOF has paid for two athletes' licenses for 2017, but we need to develop a policy on eligibility criteria for future years.

### **Foot O**

One local High-Performance training camp was hosted in 2017. It was held in the Kaapsehoop area of Mpumalanga. 19 athletes from the SAOF Youth, Junior, Senior and Development squads attended. Once again this camp was only possible thanks to the planning of our national coach, Tania Wimberley, and the support of three other qualified coaches. The camp was held on high-quality maps in good technical terrain. All of the maps have been used in the past two Big Five events and most were funded under the SAOF's strategic maps initiative.

A team of 2 men and 1 woman represented SA at JWOC held in Finland. All three athletes were attending their 2<sup>nd</sup> JWOC. Their prior experience was highly beneficial, however, it was once again evident that we have a lot of work to do to improve on an elite level. The team was accompanied by a level 2 coach and a team manager which contributed to the success of the trip.

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Initially it seemed as though SA would not have any representatives at WOC in Estonia, however in May, Michael Crone and Christie Courtnage received invitations to attend the IOF WOC clinic. Due to the timing of JWOC Christie declined her place, however Michael took advantage of the opportunity and qualified for his second WOC sprint final. The SAOF congratulates Michael on this excellent achievement.

The SAOF continues to be mindful of the numerous challenges that our athletes face with regards to attending both JWOC and WOC.

## Conclusion

It has been disappointing to suffer the loss of two orienteering clubs in the past year. Although these clubs were small, their demise serves to remind us that it is not easy to build sustainable clubs.

Despite these set-backs the orienteering community in South Africa continues to put on large number of quality events.

It is pleasing to recognise the energetic activity in rural Limpopo. And we are appreciative of the kind donations received towards these efforts from our orienteering friends in Switzerland. The SAOF will continue to support growth and development of orienteering in Limpopo. This is, in fact, the realisation of our strategy. That is, when we find keen people who are eager to learn and energetic in their efforts to grow orienteering, we will be there in whatever way we can to support them.

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Big Five Orienteering event will take place in Limpopo over the New Year period. The SAOF together with the Big Five Orienteering NPC are committed to involving the Polokwane Orienteering club as far as possible and presenting as many participation opportunities for the local community as possible. Together with POC, we hope that this event will leave a legacy that helps us support continued growth of orienteering in Limpopo.

We also look forward to working more closely with our older orienteering clubs to find new and innovative ways to attract and keep more new participants to the sport we love.