

**NEW ZEALAND ORIENTEERING FEDERATION**

**ORIENTEERING**

**JUNIOR SPORT POLICY**

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## **1. PREFACE**

### **1.1 ORIENTEERING**

Orienteering is an all year round sport, and recreational activity, that is enjoyed by a number of New Zealanders, both male and female, and of all ages and levels of abilities. Individuals, couples, families and other groups participate.

Unlike many sports, where different age groups generally take part in segregated competitions, orienteering events cater for all age groups at the same time. Except for a few special events, all orienteering events cater for different levels of ability.

Orienteering is a true “Sport for Life”. It is also described as the “Thought Sport”, the “Family Sport”, and “Cunning Running”.

### **1.2 WHY IS A JUNIOR SPORT POLICY NEEDED?**

The New Zealand Orienteering Federation (NZOF) is recognised by Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) as the organisation responsible for the sport of orienteering.

It is well established that regular participation in sport and physical recreation is vital for young people’s health, physical and mental development, and well being. Young people will only want to continue to participate in sport if they enjoy the experience. Everyone involved in orienteering needs to ensure that young people enjoy orienteering and do so safely.

Juniors have the right to have their needs and requirements catered for. The NZOF already recognises that different groupings of people who orienteer have different needs and requirements, for example Elites and women. Juniors are identified as a group needing rules governing competition at their levels. This Junior Sport Policy formally acknowledges junior orienteers as a specific group with special needs and requirements and lays down guidelines for meeting these needs and requirements in addition to the rules.

This Junior Sport Policy helps guide all people involved in the delivery of junior orienteering, including parents, event organisers, course planners, controllers, coaches, club members, and teachers, on a consistent high quality approach. These people will help ensure the consistency of delivery of orienteering to juniors wherever they take part in orienteering.

Young people have a wide range of sports to choose from. If the sport of orienteering is to survive and grow in New Zealand more people need to become orienteers, either competitively or recreationally. Many people develop a lifelong interest in sport while at school. It is important that the introduction children receive to orienteering, and any following orienteering activities they take part in, are quality experiences and are appropriate to their level of ability. If children enjoy their first experiences they may consider taking up orienteering as their sport, or one of their sports and recreational activities.

### 1.3 WHO ARE DESIGNATED JUNIORS IN ORIENTEERING?

Juniors are those aged 20 years and under.

At the beginning of the year in which an orienteer turns 21 he or she becomes a senior.

### 1.4 DOES ORIENTEERING NEED TO BE MODIFIED FOR JUNIORS AT EVENTS?

In orienteering at club, regional and national levels, whether juniors are taking part competitively or recreationally, there is no need for orienteering to be modified. The essence of orienteering is fair competition, whatever one's age or ability. Juniors are a fundamental group in the sport. Orienteering is by nature a progressive system of skill acquisition, development and practice, and this caters for both juniors and seniors whatever their level of attainment.

Sports such as rugby and netball take place with the same sized playing area and equipment, wherever the game takes place and whoever the competitor. That area and equipment has been developed for adults playing that sport, and usually are too big for children.

It is simple in orienteering to adjust the size of the "playing area" for juniors. Setting courses of appropriate lengths and difficulty according to the ages and ability of the junior does this. The NZOF sets guidelines for appropriate course length and navigational difficulty, which takes into account juniors' different levels of physical fitness.

## 2. PROVIDERS OF JUNIOR ORIENTEERING

Parents, teachers, coaches and officials will

- ✍ Offer positive well-informed leadership
- ✍ Make orienteering fun and enjoyable
- ✍ Make sure every young person achieves and feels success
- ✍ Encourage young people to make their own sporting decisions
- ✍ Put more emphasis on effort than outcome
- ✍ Let children be challenged, but they do not need to be pushed
- ✍ Behave with fairness and honesty
- ✍ Set an example of good sporting behaviour and the spirit of friendship
- ✍ Show respect for juniors and each other, for journalists, spectators and inhabitants of the area
- ✍ Help talented young sports people keep up with academic work and to socialise.

### 3. JUNIORS IN THE NZOF

NZOF Appointments include a Primary Schools Coordinator and a Secondary Schools Coordinator. The role of the Coordinators is to look after the interests of Juniors in their segment of the education system, to liaise with SPARC, Regional Sports Trusts and with schools. They should facilitate the training of coaches of Juniors, encourage the development or orienteering in schools and of school orienteering competitions, and offer advice where required.

The NZOF Championships and A-level events include courses for all Junior Age Grades, both competitive and recreational.

The NZOF has the following structures and events that cater for older juniors:

- ✍ Regional Junior Squads
- ✍ National Development Squad

Training camps are organised that provide coaching, mentoring and competition, and opportunities for developing friendships, and participation in other activities

- ✍ Regional Secondary Schools Series
- ✍ Regional Secondary Schools Championships
- ✍ North Island and South Island Secondary Schools Championships
- ✍ New Zealand Secondary Schools Championships

These competitions have both Championship and Novice grades for Junior, Intermediate and Senior age groups, which cater for experienced, beginner and recreational young orienteers.

### 4. JUNIORS IN CLUBS

Clubs need to nurture their juniors. They are our fellow orienteers and club members, and our future subscription payers, course planners and controllers. Our sport will die without them.

Clubs can help juniors with:

- ✍ Support - Appoint a person in the club to manage and support juniors
- ✍ Coaching - Arrange regular coaching sessions for all levels
  - Send juniors to coaching camps. Help juniors with camp fees.
  - Recruit mentors for junior members
- ✍ Recreational juniors - Treat all juniors considerately. We aren't all elites.
- ✍ Travel - Arrange a roster for giving lifts to juniors with transport difficulties
- ✍ Recognition - Publicise juniors' successes in club magazines and local newspapers.
  - Keep a record of credits and apply for Badges for eligible juniors.
- ✍ Safety - All club members should help ensure the safety of juniors at all times.
- ✍ Club Uniform - Provide a club uniform for all juniors, subsidised or on loan.
- ✍ Trials - Keep important events away from the exam period (Oct – Nov)
- ✍ Social Element - Include other wholesome activities associated with orienteering events / trips, eg stops at thermal pools and food stops.

## **5. PATHWAY OF DEVELOPMENT AT ORIENTEERING EVENTS**

The NZOF has laid down strict guidelines for courses at orienteering events. Courses are graded according to navigational difficulty. Colours are used to designate difficulty. There may be different length courses of the same colour at events if a greater number of orienteers are expected. The rules specifically relating to juniors are printed at the end of this policy.

However the rules regarding which ages should do which courses are only for those who wish to be competitive. Recreational orienteers can choose whichever course they wish, but the organisers are obliged to advise people against attempting a course that the organisers think will be too difficult.

### **5.1 AGES 0 – 2+ YEARS CARRIED BY PARENT / IN A PUSHCHAIR**

Many children take part in orienteering from soon after they are born, being carried by a parent in a front or backpack, or pushed in a pushchair or buggy. Then there comes a stage where children are too heavy to be carried, and are not able to walk far enough to do a regular course with the family, and the terrain is not suitable for a pushchair.

While too young to understand the satisfaction gained from reading a map, navigating one's way around a course and finding the controls, babies and young children enjoy being with their parent and experiencing new places.

### **5.2 AGES 3 – 6+ YEARS PRE-MAP READING LEVEL**

Children accompany a parent or family on a regular course. They may carry the clipcard and use the clipper at each control. They may also carry a map but cannot yet read it. They enjoy the experience of taking part in a family activity that takes them into unfamiliar territory, and of finding the controls.

#### **STRING COURSES**

The aim of String Courses is to enable children to have fun and safely follow a course indicated by a "string", eg rope or tape, and to develop self-confidence by venturing into unfamiliar territory on their own. The course can be 100 metres – 1km+ long, laid out on the ground around an area of unfamiliar territory, in a safe environment, with no chance of getting lost. The controls each have a big picture attached, and the clipcards have small matching pictures in the boxes.

The children practise the skills of following a course, finding the controls, matching the picture on the control with one on the clipcard, and using the clipper to clip accurately in the correct box.

NOTE: Older children with intellectual disabilities can also successfully participate in this activity.

### **5.3 AGES 6 – 14 YEARS WHITE COURSE**

A child with their own map does a White course accompanied by a coach (a parent or other trained person). When the child has mastered the basic skills they can then be “shadowed” or followed at a distance around the course by a coach to ensure the child is reading the map correctly and is going the right way.

#### **Skills**

- ✍ Learn basic symbols eg Start place, fence, track, and understand what they represent.
- ✍ Read and understand control descriptions. Control descriptions are in English.
- ✍ Learn what the colours on maps represent.
- ✍ Orientate the map, so the features on the map line up with the features on the ground.
- ✍ Fold the map to a manageable size without hiding the course or magnetic north arrows.
- ✍ Work out where one is on the map.
- ✍ Thumb the map, ie using the thumb to indicate where on the map you are.
- ✍ Complete courses unaided.

Once these skills are mastered a compass can be introduced, which is used at this stage simply to ensure the map is orientated. The recommended compass is one that has only a North needle and clips onto the map (clip-on compass).

When competent at White courses a Junior can move on to Yellow courses.

### **5.4 AGES 12 – 16 YEARS YELLOW COURSE**

#### **Skills**

- ✍ More advanced symbol recognition eg knoll, hill, depression.
- ✍ Simple route choice.
- ✍ Aiming off when taking short cuts, that is to aim to one side of a feature so you know which way to turn when you meet the catching linear feature.
- ✍ Being able to return to the handrail.
- ✍ The use of the compass for limited rough directional navigation.

When a junior can competently complete yellow courses they can move on to orange courses.

### **5.5 AGES 14 – 18 YEARS ORANGE COURSE**

#### **Skills**

- ✍ Understanding of International Orienteering Federation symbols on control descriptions.
- ✍ Interpretation of all features of full-colour orienteering maps.
- ✍ Developing an understanding of scale.
- ✍ Contour reading – visualisation of the landform patterns that contour lines represent.
- ✍ Route choice according to one’s fitness and ability.
- ✍ Rough compass use and distance estimation.
- ✍ Choosing and aiming for attack points is practised.
- ✍ Relocation skills become even more important.

Juniors who are competitive will move on to do Red courses. Recreational juniors will probably want to continue to do Orange courses, and not advance to Red courses, as Orange will be of a sufficient challenge.

## **5.6 AGES 16 – 20 YEARS RED COURSE**

### **Skills**

- ✍ Refined compass use
- ✍ Identifying two or more possible routes and selecting the best for each control.
- ✍ Accurate contour reading and visualisation of land forms.
- ✍ Map memory

## **6. REGULAR ORIENTEERING EVENTS**

**VENUES:** Orienteering events are usually held in forests and farmland, often one or more hour's drive from towns or cities.

**ORGANISATION:** Events take a minimum of two people to organise and run.

**MAPS:** Specially drawn colour maps are used. These take many hours to produce, and cost hundreds to thousands of dollars. Colour copying costs from about \$1.50 per A3.

**ORIENTEERING CONTROLS:** Controls used for events cost up to \$50 each.

**COURSE PLANNERS:** Course planners usually have at least two or three years of orienteering experience.

### **LEARNING ORIENTEERING:**

The NZOF has a part-time Coaching Director. One of the Director's main priorities is training coaches.

The NZOF runs training camps for juniors at national and regional level

At club level the regular events are used as the training platform because they are often distant from where people live. Club coaches teach newcomers basic skills. The NZOF has the expectation that all orienteers, except the very new, will spend some time with others less experienced, after completing the course.

There is a resource collection in each region of orienteering books, magazines, videos, learning games and worksheets available. Many clubs also have websites, as does the NZOF.

NZQA Unit Standards for completion of courses, setting courses and drawing maps are now also available.

## **7. KIWI ORIENTEERING**

Kiwi Orienteering has been developed to overcome the factors that would prevent orienteering being tried – distance to events or areas that have been mapped, cost of maps and equipment, and an insufficient number of coaches. Kiwi orienteering is a minimum cost, minimum equipment and minimum preparation way of introducing the sport.

NZOF volunteer coaches have been trained to teach teachers, other adults and senior students to coach juniors in Kiwi Orienteering. It is greatly more time effective for a coach instructor to spend one and a half hours teaching say ten teachers who will then each coach their class, than for that coach to coach each class.

Coaching of children usually takes place in school classrooms and playgrounds, or at holiday programme venues. The children draw the first maps, and after a very short while set some of the courses.

**VENUES:** Kiwi Orienteering takes place in school grounds, at holiday programme venues and nearby parks.

**ORGANISATION:** A teacher or other adults on their own can easily organise orienteering activities for a group of children.

**MAPS:** Black and white maps are used. These can be cheaply photocopied.

Children can quickly draw their own maps with pencil and paper. They start by drawing desk top Treasure Island maps then classroom maps, and then maps of small areas of the playground.

Teachers, or other adults, can quite easily produce a map of the school grounds.

Maps of local parks may be available from the Council. These can be adapted for orienteering.

**ORIENTEERING CONTROLS:** First controls are stickers, and pieces of card or paper. Such things as plastic bottles tops and ice-cream containers can also be used. Moveable electric fence posts with coloured felt pens make inexpensive controls. Controls with stands, clippers and flags can be purchased for around \$25 each.

**COURSE PLANNERS:** Coaches and children are the course planners.

**LEARNING KIWI ORIENTEERING:**

Learning Kiwi Orienteering is easy and fun. Approach the Junior Sport person at your regional Sports Trust who will organise a coach, time and venue.

## 7.1 OBJECTIVES OF KIWI ORIENTEERING

- ✍ Experiencing fun, enjoyment, excitement, achievement and personal challenge
- ✍ Improved physical fitness
- ✍ Development of decision making skills
- ✍ Development of self-confidence and self-reliance resulting in higher levels of self-esteem.
- ✍ Learning map-reading skills that are very important in modern life
- ✍ Learning to cope with success and mistakes
- ✍ Development of social skills

## 7.2 FAIR PLAY – RULES FOR JUNIORS

- ✍ Where the controls are is a secret. Let other orienteers find the controls by themselves.
- ✍ Leave the controls in the place they have been put.
- ✍ Be as quiet as possible while competing.
- ✍ If someone is lost you may show him or her on their map where they are.
- ✍ If you find someone who is hurt and can't get back to the finish on their own, stop your course and go to back to the Start or go to the Finish, which ever is closest, to get help.
- ✍ Treat other orienteers, coaches and officials with respect.

## 7.3 SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR KIWI ORIENTEERING

**Venues:** The area should have very clear boundaries such as fences, roads or streams. Watch for potential hazards, particularly traffic and water; the area must be safe.

In parks or other areas open to the public, children should go in pairs.

If adult helpers are available they can be placed near any potential hazard to ensure the children don't go near it.

## 8. CLUBS AND SCHOOL LINKS

Clubs need to help all schools in their area with orienteering as much as possible, depending on their resources. School children, and their families, are potential club members.

- ✍ Appoint a Junior Sport Coordinator who can offer or arrange assistance to Primary, Intermediate and Secondary schools when requested.
- ✍ Have one or more Instructors trained to run Kiwi Orienteering inservices for Primary teachers and other groups. The Regional Sports Trusts will organise inservice training.
- ✍ Have a mapper available to map school ground for a reasonable fee.
- ✍ Establish Permanent Orienteering Courses in parks and other suitable areas for schools and the community to use.
- ✍ Maintain contact with Secondary Schools – especially PE teachers and Sports Coordinators. Advertise events, and actively recruit students.
- ✍ Publicise Juniors' successes. Let their schools know.
- ✍ Arrange every second event in or close to a town and invite the school communities to attend. Such events should have coaches available to help newcomers, in particular, Juniors.
- ✍ Organise district or regional inter-school competitions at venues not too distant from the schools involved. Regional Sports Trusts have people available to help organise though not run such events.

## 9. ORIENTEERING EVENTS SAFETY GUIDELINES

### 9.1 SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

**Venues:** Orienteering events tend to be family type affairs where other adults will help keep an eye on all children, but the parent(s) or caregiver is ultimately responsible for their child(ren). While the organisers of events will usually take care to select a suitable venue and make courses to suit young people's abilities, parents and caregivers need to check for any potential hazards, eg ponds and farm machinery, and keep their children away from them.

**Course suitability:** Parents should also check the suitability of the course the child is going to do. If in doubt the child should do an easier one or the parent can shadow the child.

**Clothing:** Young people tend to be more susceptible to extremes of temperature and to sunburn than adults. Parents and caregivers need to ensure their child is appropriately clothed and with a head covering, suitable for the weather. During summer young people should wear light, full body covering, sunscreen and a hat that shades all exposed skin.

During cold weather woollen or polypropylene underwear and gloves and hat and full body covering is advised. If it is windy a windbreaker jacket is needed.

Footwear should be such that it doesn't matter if it gets wet or muddy but protects the feet. It should also have grip for grassy slopes. Touch shoes are an alternative to orienteering shoes.

**Food and fluid:** Young people need to have sufficient to eat and drink as they can use up a lot of energy orienteering. In hot weather they should be encouraged to drink water before and after their course.

**Whistles.** Juniors should carry a whistle, particularly on Yellow, Orange and Red courses. If lost or hurt the signal is six blasts followed by a minute's pause then another six blasts. A plastic whistle is best.

## 9.2 SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR EVENT ORGANISERS, COURSE PLANNERS AND CONTROLLERS

Event Organisers, Course Planners and Controllers should be thoroughly familiar with the rules for events relating to juniors. These will be found at the end of this Policy. Before setting White courses all should have spent some time following juniors on White courses at other events so as to get an understanding of their abilities and limitations.

**Venues:** Parking and registration areas should be away from all hazards, such as water features, electric fences, and farm machinery. The siting of registration and the route to the Start and finish should avoid crossing the approach road or track to the parking area.

Parents appreciate a covered, fenced crèche area, for young children.

**Courses should be planned with the safety of junior orienteers being of paramount importance.** The courses should have no route choice where it is necessary to avoid crossing or going near electric fences, deep or swiftly flowing water, cliffs, etc. Instead taped routes should be provided, if necessary, to avoid dangerous areas.

The guidelines for course length should be strictly followed. On White, Yellow and Orange courses the recommended target times are the **median** times, and **not** the winners times, eg the median time for W-14A is 50 minutes. The winner may only take 30 minutes while the one who takes the longest will take 70 minutes. The aim is for all juniors, whatever their individual abilities, to successfully complete their course. Not finishing (DNFs) and disqualifications (DSQs) are very discouraging.

## **APPENDIX**

### **NZOF RULES FOR NEW ZEALAND FOOT ORIENTEERING EVENTS 1999 AND UPDATES**

The following are rules that specifically apply to juniors. Juniors are those aged under 21 (At the beginning of the year an orienteer turns 21 he or she becomes a senior).

#### **5. CLASSES**

5.2 Competitors aged 20 or younger are eligible to run in each class up to the end of the calendar year in which they reach the designated age. They are entitled to compete in younger classes up to and including 21.

#### **16. COURSES**

16.3 The standard of orange courses shall provide enjoyment for the average competitor.

16.4 The standard of yellow and white courses shall provide success and encouragement for the least able competitor.

16.9 The following colour labels shall be used to denote the technical difficulty:

#### WHITE COURSE

Used for: M-12 (Men 12 years and younger), W-12 (Women 12 years and younger), M-14B, W-14B.

Control sites must follow drawn linear features (tracks, fences, streams, distinct vegetation boundaries, etc.). A control site must be placed at every decision point (eg a turning point, a track junction or a change in the type of linear feature – from following a track to following a stream). All control markers must be visible from the approach side. Where the course has to deviate from the handrail feature (eg to cross through a forest block), the route must be marked all the way until a new handrail feature is reached. The Start Triangle shall be on linear feature. If no such feature is available, then there must be a taped route all the way from the start to a linear feature (ie the first control). Compass use is limited to map orientation only. No route choice is offered. Doglegs are permitted.

#### YELLOW COURSE

Used for: M/W-14A, M/W-16B, Adult C classes (novices)

Control sites must be on or near (<50 metres) drawn linear features (tracks, fences, streams, distinct vegetation boundaries, etc.) but preferably not at turning points. This gives the opportunity to follow handrails or to cut across country (ie limited route choice). Control sites must be visible from the approach side by any reasonable route. Compass use is limited to rough directional navigation. Contour recognition is not required for navigation but simple contour features may be used for control sites. Doglegs are permitted.

#### ORANGE COURSE

Used for: M/W-16A, M/W-20B, Adult B classes

Course shall have route choice with prominent attack points near the control sites and/or catching features less than 100m behind. Controls sites may be fairly small point features and the control markers need not necessarily be visible from the attack point. Exit from the control shall not be the same as the entry (doglegs are not permitted). Simple navigation by contours and rough compass with limited distance estimation required. Use of a chain of prominent features as “stepping stones” is encouraged.

#### RED COURSE

Used for: all other classes including and above M/W-18A (both long and short courses), and Elite classes.

Navigation shall be as difficult as possible with small contour and point features as preferred control sites (no obvious attack points, no handrails, etc.). Control sites shall be placed in areas rich in detail. Route choice shall be an important element in most legs. Doglegs are not permitted. Note: It may be impossible to set RED courses on some maps.

16.10 Course lengths are given below in terms of target times. For classes 18 and over the target times are for the top NZ competitors (whether they attend or not). For classes 16 and under the median NZ competitor shall take the time given below.

16.11 Target times in single day events shall be:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Target Time in Minutes</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Target Time in Minutes</u>
M-12	35 median time	W-12	35 median time
M-14A	50 median time	W-14A	50 median time
M-16A	60 median time	W-16A	55 median time
M-18A	60	W-18A	55
M-20A	70	W-20A	60

## **17. RESTRICTED AREAS AND ROUTES**

- 17.1 Rules set by the NZOF or organising club to protect the environment shall be strictly observed by all people connected with the event.
- 17.2 Out-of-bounds and dangerous areas, forbidden routes, line features that shall not be crossed, etc. shall be described in the information and marked on the map. If necessary they may also be marked on the ground. Competitors may not enter, or follow or cross such areas, routes or features.
- 17.3 Compulsory routes, crossing points and passage points shall be marked clearly on the map and on the ground. Competitors shall follow the entire length of any marked section of their course.

## **18 CONTROL DESCRIPTIONS**

- 18.2 The control descriptions shall be in the form of symbols and in accordance with the IOF *Control Descriptions*. Both IOF symbols and English written descriptions must be given for age classes 16 and under and for B and C classes.

## **22 START**

- 22.10 Where possible the Start point for young children shall not be too far away from registration, or the finish, to allow parents with split starts the opportunity to escort their young children to the start.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **2. Basic principles**

#### 2.2 Aim of good course planning

The aim of course planning is to offer competitors courses correctly designed for their expected abilities. Results must reflect the competitors' technical and physical ability.

#### 2.3.3 Competitor enjoyment

The popularity of orienteering can only be enhanced if competitors are satisfied with the courses they are given. Careful course planning is therefore necessary to ensure that courses are appropriate in terms of length, physical and technical difficulty, control siting, etc. In this respect it is particularly important that each course is suitable for the competitors doing that course.

#### 3.9 The degree of difficulty

Attention should be paid to the competitors' expected skill, experience and ability to read or understand the fine detail of the map. It is particularly important to get the level of difficulty right when planning courses for novices and children.

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **NZOF BADGE AWARD SCHEME**

#### **1. OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1 To recognise the achievement of a consistent orienteering standard relative to one's peers.
- 1.2 To provide an ongoing incentive to improve orienteering skills especially for juniors.