

PENINSULA AND PLAINS ORIENTEERS

The first twenty years: 1977 - 1997

It's amazing how many people in the sport call themselves orienterriers. One of the members thought it was a new breed of dog. (PAPO newsletter, July 1980)

The seeds for PAPO were sown with a promotional flurry, when John and Robyn Davies, on an NZOF mission, arrived in Christchurch in December 1976. They enlisted the support of the Christchurch City Council, quickly produced some maps and organised three "rallies". The first was in South Hagley Park on 11 January 1977, coinciding with the city's Family Leisure Week. Radio 3ZB broadcast from the second event at Bottle Lake and *The Press* and suburban papers gave the sport the type of coverage we'd now sell the equipment trailer for.

An informal meeting of those interested was held on February 22, an interim committee was appointed and three more events were held throughout March. Then on 20 April 1977, Paul McOscar from the Christchurch City Council chaired a second, and more formal, meeting. From the 22 who attended, a Canterbury Orienteering Club committee was elected: Eddie Bone (chair), Jacki Rigg (secretary/treasurer), plus Alex Cook, John Argue, Bernie Sommerfield, John Macdonald and Les White.

During the year, events were held at Hagley Park, Victoria Park, Spencer Par, Van Asch Farm, South Brighton Domain, Mt Grey and Bottle Lake. Twenty years later six of these seven are still in use.

Composing a suitable map for Victoria Park provided quite a challenge. A 27-year-old plan of the walking tracks was obtained from the city council and, from Lands and Survey, a 1973 aerial photograph. The two inch to a mile map which could have been adapted was out of print and the copy which should have been in the public library was missing. So it was onto the hills with an Abney level, staff, calculator and a new secret range finding device dreamed up by Bern Sommerfield.

"To begin with," Alex Cook recalls, "we were complete novices. Once at Spencer Park we had three courses. Each course was set by a different person who put out his own controls. All three of us chose one feature in common. The result was three flags, side by side, at the same spot." Rick Bolch recalls that control cards were done on a Banda machine, then glued to cardboard and perforated on a sewing machine. Early clippers, made by Bob Alexander, used old gramophone needles.

At the second Annual General Meeting on 27 April 1978, the new club name of "Peninsula and Plains Orienteers" was voted in, though not unanimously. Eddie Bone continued as president while Keith Easton became secretary. After a two-year stint by Keith, Alex Cook became secretary for the next eight years, apart from a year's rest in 1985. Les White and Ken Sibly shared the president's job in 1981.

The first newsletter was produced in September 1977 then irregularly until Gaye and

Graham Boniface put it on a firm basis in 1970. They went on to co-edit 40 issues.

The range of black and white maps steadily increased, partly because Sinclair Bennett just went off and drew them – places like Okuti Valley and Saddle Road. Graham Boniface, however, drew the club's first five-colour map at Orton Bradley Park. IOF symbols were used but the contour interval was 20 metres. It was introduced for the club's first Canterbury Championships, but only just.

The first problem was getting the map to the printer's on time. The printer then estimated a week to print the maps. One week later Graham went back to find the plates hadn't even been made. Whatever Graham said at this point was effective; the maps were printed by the end of the next day. This left a week to check the map and pre-mark the courses, there was a petrol shortage in Canterbury and the weather turned back to winter ! But champs day dawned fine and clear and there was enough petrol around for everyone to get there.

The 1982 champs doubled with PAPO's first hosting of the South island Champs. held on a new colour map at Allandale, these champs were also PAPO's first badge event. Planner, Graham Boniface, and controller, Alex Cook, obviously took badge status seriously as the event included a manned control, "which was manned all day in trying weather conditions."

The winners of the 1980 champs had been Eileen and Graham Frith. their arrival gave PAPO some much needed technical depth. This was well illustrated in Graham Boniface's presidential report for 1982. He reported that Neville Fagerlund had begun the club's first formal training sessions "until our training had reached the limits of our experience. At this stage Eileen and Graham Frith came to the rescue and organised an excellent training event on what they had been taught in Europe and Scandinavia."

Graham Frith organised the first mountain marathon in October 1980, "The Culverden Canter" and with Eileen, they put together the first Canterbury schools champs at Bottle Lake in early 1981. The senior boys and girls now each compete for the Ian Rowland Trophy, in memory of Ian Rowland, drowned in a canoeing accident in 1985. Yet in spite of Ross Stanton's enthusiasm and in spite of able organisation for many years by Irene Pow and more recently Mary Mackintosh, the numbers participating are still limited.

Kath Adams has also worked tirelessly amongst the schools. Her influence at Kaiapoi High School has resulted in the school producing two NZ champions and four NZ representatives and the winning team in the Canterbury School Champs on no fewer than nine occasions.

The mountain marathons continued with the Amuri Meander in 1981, Jollies Jaunt in 1982 and with the enthusiasm of people such as Ross Wakelin, on through till 1992. One spin-off has been the Flock Hill, Castle Hill, Butlers Bush and Apollo Hill four maps.

The 1983 Canterbury Champs were to be at Esk Vale but late in the piece the farmer said

his farm wouldn't be available. Someone, however, managed to talk him into allowing the S.I. Champs (now a separate event) to be held there in 1984. But only with the inclusion of a Special Event Regulation that "anyone seen standing on wires or using other methods which may strain the fence wires will be automatically disqualified." In the event some concessions were made.

Farmers were also one of the problems for the 1984 Canterbury Champs. The farmer who just happened to own the middle of the new Teddington map said NO! And then planner, Ken Sibley, received the news from Marcus King that the maps were printed but the colour registration was lousy. "Two thirds of the maps were useless," Ken reported, "and even though I looked at all of them, two got through to the competitors with no green on them." Finally to get long enough courses, Ken had to join the old Allandale map on to the new one.

The club's first camper trailer was purchased in October 1979 for \$458. In 1982 it was completely overhauled by Dag Guest and helpers, and was finally replaced when given to fledgling new club, TOPS. Mr Equipment in the eighties came to be Rick Bolch. The President's report for 1983 says it all: "It never ceases to amaze me, the amount of time and unique ideas Rick has when it comes to manufacturing and maintaining our equipment - whoever would have thought that school desks would make perfect toilets."

In the nineties, Dave Armstrong has looked after the trailer and equipment, apart from a two-year break provided by Andrew Mackintosh. In the April 1994 issue of the newsletter the trailer related how on one occasion "two intelligent people" had run it down "Dave and Irene's garage ramp, straight into the back of someone's car" with lots of damage to the car.

The first Orienteer of the Year series was organised by James Tubb in 1983. Besides the usual map fees there was also an entry fee for the series of \$2 (senior) and \$1 (junior). A major innovation occurred with the second event of the series when, for the higher grades, international symbols were used as practice for APOC.

Club colours of rust and grey were introduced in 1984. "Less conspicuous in the forest" was the rationale, though this is now completely at odds with the current vibrant pink, and purple.

The annual Forest Fun Run began in 1985 and continued successfully for twelve years. From Maria Pilkington to Katrina Wilke, Jenny Moore to Wendy Bee, all but one of the organisers were women. Yet while organisers came and went, Dave Alexander managed the finances throughout. Initially it attracted large sponsorship from Winstones and distributed some of the profits to NZOF. In its later years, however it was more low budget and profits were used entirely for PAPO's junior travel fund. In 1992, a printing error saw thousands of entry forms distributed describing it as the "Fun Fun". But with competitor numbers not increasing in spite of every innovation conceivable, including a mountain bike event, it was decided to end it in 1996.

PAPO was not slow in realising the importance of promotion. They organised bike-Os, tri-Os and made "publicity and promotion" the theme for 1983. In 1984, PAPO took on its biggest venture up till then when it hosted a warm-up event for APOC. Club growth was then rapid, and in 1986, with Rob Miller as president, PAPO won the Ampro Award for a membership increase from 97 to 186.

As we were placing the control at the stump, a naked man, carrying a full glass of water, leapt over the embankment and ran at a furious pace straight past the control (without even stopping to write down the number) and headed off into the trees. (Lyn Hoseason in Contour Lines, October 1994)

From 1997 women headed the club with Jo Guest (Wilson) as president for three years and Chrissie Williams for the next two. George Elliott was treasurer for all five years. It was during this time that PAPO was involved in the 1989 South Island Moro 7-Day and then organised an Easter 3-day in 1990. PAPO organised three of the events for the Moro 7-day festival, Dunedin and Southland sharing the other four. With almost a thousand competitors it stands as PAPO's biggest undertaking. The post-event evaluation by competitors rated PAPO's day at Tekapo highly on all counts: organisation, courses and terrain. The toilets at Craigmere, however, were rated a "disgrace".

PAPO members competed nationally right from the start and the first group competed overseas, in Australia, in 1980. But in spite of the enthusiasm, national success was slow to come. It was not until 1986 that PAPO produced its first national champions when Roger Thomas won M21A (not 21E) and Jenni Adams won W15A. The following year the first PAPO members to represent NZ, Jenni Adams, Joy Talbot and Chrissie Williams, were selected for the ANZ Challenge. All three were again selected for Tasmania in 1988.

Following 1986's successes, further national (classic distance) championships were won at two-yearly intervals. Andrew Laurenson (M13), Jenni Adams (W19) and Chrissie Williams (W35) won in 1988. Chrissie again won in 1990 and Caroline Stowell and Roland Payne took out the W/M16 double at Omihi in 1992. Lisa Frith has since joined the list, winning W18 in 1996.

For APOC94, Chrissie, Kevin McGlinchy and Ross Arnold were NZ reps, while Michael Croxford and Lisa Frith were in the NZ junior team for the first Southern Cross Challenge. (Roland Payne and Michael Adams were also selected but were unable to travel.) Paul Frith emulated his sister by being selected for the junior challenge in 1996. Kevin was in the ANZ Challenge team in 1995 and PAPO provided seven internationals when it hosted the challenge in January 1997. First time rep, Trish Faulkner was joined by Chrissie Williams, Robyn Davies, Lisa Frith, Paul Frith and Jan Davies. The seventh was former Australian, Mick Finn, now living in Timaru, called up by a beleaguered Australian team to represent his old home.

But PAPO's biggest honour has come with the selection of Jenni Adams, now resident in Sweden, for the 1995 World Champs and the 1996 World Cup series.

Canterbury's Big Snow in August 1992 added extra interest to an event at Butlers Bush. Planner, James Shulmeister, reported, "as I waded through the now chest deep snow to place the flags, I reflected sadly that I had beaten an obvious trail between controls 2 and 3 but cheered up when I realised that I was condemning competitors who chose to follow to some excellent snow drifts."

The 1992 national champs rank as one of PAPO's major accomplishments. When PAPO hosted a warm-up event for APOC84, no club members actually competed. But in 1992, everyone competed as well as playing some organisational role. At the forefront of the mass involvement were Chrissie Williams, who coordinated everyone and everything, Roger Bee and Paul Hammond who produced the new championship map at Omihi.

At the Canterbury champs, earlier in the year, the manual results were a shambles. Derek Goring and Claire Mulcock went home and told each other surely PAPO can do better. They set about devising a computerised system, trialling it one month before the nationals at the School Champs. The outcome was that, in spite of having to power everything with a car battery on a remote sandy beach at the foot of Omihi forest, the speed with which the results were displayed at the 1992 nationals was nothing short of outstanding.

Computers, Roger Bee and Claire Mulcock were the common ingredients in PAPO's latest major multi-day, the Southern Orienteering Series, as part of which in January 1997 PAPO hosted the ANZ Challenge. PAPO put on three events, all on maps produced using computer aided design software (OCAD), which PAPO purchased in 1995. Roger Bee, club president in 1992, 1995 and 1996, produced the ANZ Challenge individual championship map at Dalethorpe. Claire Mulcock gave up the best part of a year's free time to coordinate the whole series which also included coordinating Dunedin and Southland, who hosted three events between them.

The number of big events hosted by PAPO has certainly quickened in recent years. In 1995, the Silva NZ Secondary School Champs was hosted and, within months of the Southern Orienteering Series, Dave Laurie organised and Peter Squires planned the 2nd NZ Rogaining Championships, at Craigieburn.

Chrissie Williams was again coordinator for the NZ Secondary School Champs. Having been NZOF Secretary in 1992, following her stint as PAPO president, Chrissie was honoured, in 1996, with the NZOF Silva Award for her contribution to orienteering. John and Robyn Davies who returned to Christchurch to live in 1989, have also continued to contribute to the club they helped get underway and orienteering in general. John was club president in 1993 and Robyn is the South Island rep on the NZOF Council and also NZOF vice-president.

*An orienteer called Joe Stubb
Broke away to form a new club.
He designed a new compass
Which caused a great rumpus
Cos it always led to the pub.*

(PAPO newsletter, August 1981)

In 1989 with PAPO being the largest club in NZ there was discussion on splitting into two clubs. One consideration was that a club has a maximum size and that membership will not grow beyond this maximum. PAPO did not split, instead the very much smaller Canterbury University Club began in 1990. Buoyed by the enthusiasm of Ross Wakelin, Janet Powell and Jenni Adams it seemed to have a bright future, but in the last couple of years it has almost ceased to exist. At the same time, the two-clubs debate has revived.

The Moro 7-day focussed on Timaru, where Sue and Nigel King were the series secretaries. It also introduced the Craigmore map, south of Timaru. Yet in spite of regular use of the map and much promotional effort by 1994 president, Kevin McGlinchy, a South Canterbury club has not been forthcoming. Nevertheless, as part of a strategic planning exercise in 1996, the club committed itself to establishing a second Canterbury club based on Timaru. The strategic plan, to take the club into the next century, was the brainchild of 1997 president Jan Davies. The plan itself embraces key areas such as promotion, coaching, events and mapping.

With the strategic plan in place, PAPO hopes to avoid the membership decline that occurred before 1996, when the introduction of social membership and a proactive follow up with casual event participants resulted in membership soaring back to 1983's level. (Almost 180 members at the end of 1996.) Of course, retention has been as much as the heart of the matter as promotion. Nevertheless, a handful of long-time members remain. Besides life members, Alex Cook and Rick Bolch, those who have been with the club since before 1980 include Andy Buchanan, Ray Hall, Paul Hammond and Dave Laurie. And some like 1982-83 vice president, Ray Pratt, have rejoined.

PAPO has produced almost all of its maps itself. Andy Buchanan was an early fieldworker and Peter Jones and Margaret Bird were prominent in the mid-80s. OCAD has introduced new cartographers such as Derek Goring and Bruce Steven and new fieldworkers, Dave Evans and Ross Barnett, have joined Joy Talbot and Vaughan Laurenson. Course setting skills remain crucial, but not even Simon Swaffield's workshops for new planners anticipated the following.

While checking the proposed start area early one morning I came across an elephant grazing peacefully in the forest. Of course as an orienteer I didn't for one moment allow it to deter me from my objectives, but I couldn't help wondering about it. (Bruce Arnold in Contour Lines, September 1995)

Technology has been a prominent factor in the nineties. Besides computerised results at major events and OCAD maps, most events use control descriptions produced using the software package, Event organiser. Roger Bee has established an internet NZ home page on the World Wide Web's O-net and most of the 1997 committee conduct half their business between meetings by e-mail. The newsletter, renamed Contour Lines in August 1994, is also now produced electronically.

With Jan as president a generational cycle has been completed. When John and Robyn

conducted the first rally at Bottle Lake in 1977, Jan was a nine-year-old making forts in the pines. Along, with Lisa Frith, now junior rep on the committee, and Julian Bee, editor of *Contour Lines*, Jan represents a second generation of orienteering families heading PAPO into the 21st century and its next twenty years.

WINNERS OF MAJOR PAPO TROPHIES

THE BUCHANAN TROPHY

(Canterbury Championships, fastest kilometre rate - adjusted for age)

1980	A V Fisher	W19B
1981	Les White	M50
1982	Aaron Cook	M13
1983	David Rentoul	M17
1984	Megan Cook	W12
1985	Megan Cook	W15
1986	Ken Sibly	M40
1987	Chris Forne	M12A
1988	Simon Laurie	M12A
1989	Simon Laurie	M12A
1990	Simon Laurie	M13A
1991	Lisa Frith	W12A
1992	Lisa Frith	W12A
1993	Lisa Frith	W14A
1994	Remi Pearce	M12A
1995	Remi Pearce	M12A
1996	Kevin McGlinchy	M45A

BOB ALEXANDER MEMORIAL TROPHY

(Canterbury M21A champion)

1980	Graham Frith
1981	Dag Guest
1982	Ray Pratt
1983	Graham Boniface
1984	--
1985	Graham Boniface
1986	Trevor Hoey
1987	Marcus King
1988	Trevor Hoey
1989	Ross Wakelin
1990	Ross Wakelin
1991	Ross Wakelin
1992	Ross Wakelin
1993	Craig Tuffnell
1994	Aidan Boswell

1995 Chris Forne

1996 Chris Forne

SIBLY TROPHY

(Canterbury W21A champion)

1983 Joy Talbot

1984 Eileen Frith

1985 Eileen Frith

1986 Jo Guest

1987 Chrissie Williams

1988 Jenni Adams

1989 Jo Guest

1990 Jenni Adams

1991 Joy Talbot

1992 Anitra Dowling

1993 Janet Powell

1994 Mary Rutledge

1995 Jan Davies

1996 Vivienne Prince

IAN ROWLAND MEMORIAL TROPHIES

(Canterbury Schools senior champions)

Senior Girls

1987	Jenni Adams	Kaiapoi High School
1988	Rhona Brodie	Linwood High School
1989-90	Niki Adams	Kaiapoi High School
1990	Niki Adams	Kaiapoi High School
1991	Andrea Fear	Hagley High School
1992	Caroline Stowell	Kaiapoi High School
1993	Adele Arnold	Kaiapoi High School
1994	Lisa Frith	Amuri Area School
1995	Lisa Frith	Amuri Area School
1996	Lisa Frith	Amuri Area School
1997	Lisa Frith	Cashmere High School

Senior Boys

1987	Chris Tuffley	Hagley High School
1988	G. Moore	Burnside High School
1989-90	Ben Walker	Kaiapoi High School
1991	Chris Forne	Linwood High School
1992	Ross Arnold	Kaiapoi High School
1993	Chris Forne	Linwood High School
1994	Chris Forne	Linwood High School
1995	Roland Payne	Hagley Community College
1996	Aaron Prince	Christchurch Boys High School
1997	Aaron Prince	Christchurch Boys High School