

NZ Orienteering Championships 2020 Manawatu/Levin (Wellington Orienteering Club)

Report by Neill McGowan (AOC Club Captain)

A wonderful weekend of Orienteering was had by all in the Manawatu this weekend. Auckland took a number of orienteers (76 competitors and a few non-competing spectators) down for the first major Orienteering title of the year, and were rewarded with 3 fantastic courses and challenges. In true National Championships style, the length, difficulty and complexity were in abundance and a number of stories and mistakes were shared.

Saturday – Long Distance - Parewanui, Santoft Forest

The course was typical Manawatū sand dune pine forest, similar to Woodhill but significantly heavier underfoot and harder to run through, leading to significant fatigue. The longer courses had a run-through of the spectator area to allow for water stops and no water on the course. This led to an excellent atmosphere and multiple run-throughs for some competitors. A lack of screens for time updates was offset by a localised wifi server providing real time results.

In the Women's A events we had the following winners:

W14A – Kate Borton
W18A – Rebecca Greenwood
W20A – Penelope Salmon
W21A – Emma Carruthers
W55A – Lyn Stanton

And podium finishes for

W12A – Ami McGowan (3rd)
W16A – Zara Stewart (3rd)
W65A – Bronwyn Holcombe (2nd)

In the B and AS events we had podium finishes for

W14B – Ciara Swan (1st)
W40AS – Sarah Stewart (3rd)

In the Men's A events we had the following winners:

M14A – Matthew Greenwood
M18A – Seth Dean
M21A – Kieran Woods

And podium finishes for

M16A – Nathan Borton (3rd)
M18A – Mitchell Cooper (2nd)
M18A – Aidan Skinner (3rd)
M55A – Jeff Greenwood (2nd)
M55A – Guy Cory-Wright (3rd)

In the B and AS events we had podium finishes for:

M16B – Ben Mitchell (1st)
M40B – Maurice Toes (1st)
M40B – Sean Eastwood (2nd)

Sunday – Middle Distance – Waitarere – Osgiliath NW map.

Principally mature radiata pine and macrocarpa on intricate sand dunes. Long courses had a couple of areas of rougher, low visibility forest. Huge levels of complexity and dense thick difficult dunes. Some areas with trees with low spiky branches, many moments of reading map to then look up with branches in eyes and chest. Often resulted in the choice between checking map or keeping two functioning eyes. Many stories were regaled of blood-covered self-flagellating individuals bounding to the final control. Guy Cory Wright came powering through the trees with a blood strewn face towards his 2nd place finish, there's no substance to the rumour that Jeff Greenwood had taken umbrage of finishing one place behind him and battered him with a branch on the way in.

In the Women's A events we had the following winners (two days in a row for all of them):

W18A – Rebecca Greenwood
W20A – Penelope Salmon
W21A – Emma Carruthers
W55A – Lyn Stanton

And podium finishes for

W12A – Ami McGowan (3rd)
W16A – Zara Stewart (2nd)
W16A – Anija Irvine (3rd)
W21E – Imogene Scott (3rd)
W65A – Bronwyn Holcombe (2nd)
W70A – Joanna Stewart (3rd)

In the B and AS events we had podium finishes for

W14B – Ciara Swan (1st)
W40AS – Sarah Stewart (1st)
W40AS – Catherine Crofts (3rd)

In the Men's A events we had the following winners:

M14A – Matthew Greenwood (again)
M16A – Liam Buyck
M18A – Seth Dean (again)

And podium finishes for

M12A – Harry Borton (2nd)
M18A – Aidan Skinner (3rd)
M55A – Guy Cory-Wright (2nd)
M55A – Jeff Greenwood (3rd)

In the B and AS events we had podium finishes for:

M16B – Ben Mitchell (1st).

Monday – Sprint – Horowhenua Showgrounds

A mix of areas of highly intricate building details interspersed with fast open fields, and some surprisingly technical blocks in the showgrounds. Everybody was very much under the impression that it was a running course but the introduction of two complex campuses, especially the Levin Intermediate School, and the showgrounds proved that incorrect. The most magnificent feature on the map was the usage of the cattle pens and controls inside parallel blocks and on either side of fence structures that required climbing if misread. An excellent sprint given the default assumption beforehand. The position of the spectator area in the stands being able to fully behold the final 6-10 controls in full sight lead to some fairly spectacular misreads. A really well designed event. Significant credit goes to the organisers for 3 outstandingly different events each with significant memories to take away.

As a club Auckland provided an outstanding set of results winning all the junior girls events from W12 up to W21A and the junior boys from M12 to M16. The trusted steeds of Jeff Greenwood, Martin Crosby, Alistair Stewart and Lyn Stanton showing their class in the agricultural surroundings. 25 podium finishes in total confirming our reputation as a club with significant Sprint pedigree, with Imogene and new signing Duncan Morrison taking 3rd places in the elite races.

Special credit goes to Rebecca, Penelope, Emma, Lyn and Matthew who won all three races over the weekend.

In the Women's A events we had the following winners

W12 – Zara Toes
W14 – Kate Borton
W16 – Zara Stewart
W18 – Rebecca Greenwood (x3)
W20 – Penelope Salmon (x3)
W21A – Emma Carruthers (x3)
W55 – Lyn Stanton (x3)

And podium finishes for

W12 – Ami McGowan (2nd)
W14 – Georgia Lindroos (3rd)
W16 – Aliana Henderson (3rd)
W21E – Imogene Scott (3rd)
W55 – Karen Woods (2nd)
W65 – Bronwyn Holcombe (2nd)

In the Men's A events we had the following winners:

M12 – Harry Borton
M14 – Matthew Greenwood (x3)
M16 – Nathan Borton
M55 – Jeff Greenwood
M60 – Martin Crosby
M70 – Alistair Stewart

And podium finishes for

M16 – Tom Aish (2nd)
M16 – Liam Buyck (3rd)
M18 – Mitchell Cooper (2nd)
M18 – Aidan Skinner (3rd)
M21E – Duncan Morrison (3rd)
M50 – David Stewart (3rd)

Special accolade goes to Paul Borton who took out the prestigious Borton/McGowan Senior Trophy in commanding style with a 2-1 victory. Next year Borton, next year...

Photos available on the AOC Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/auckoc>)