



May 2013
Board of Directors &
Executive Director Reports

Peter Goodwin
President

Over the past few months, I have been working in various areas ranging from helping the ski-O team pay their entry fees to dealing with insurance issues. It seems that there is never a set pathway, there is just reacting to a number of things as I also work on the various projects to move OUSA forward.

Getting money to Kazakhstan seemed to be more difficult than desired. It turned out that the only way that the money could be wired to the organizers was through the International Orienteering Federation (IOF). The IOF said, "Wire us the money and we will send it on." This was after numerous attempts were made to wire the money but it never seemed to go through. (I guess money going to Kazakhstan is a questionable direction for money from the USA to go.)

Of course, this was not something that was expected which was similar to another adventure involving OUSA insurance. This adventure involved talking with the insurance people, contacting clubs and discussing the ramifications with the various clubs. Our communication system seems to have worked in virtually all cases although one email that didn't "bounce back" did not get where it was supposed to go. This was a serious lapse although it was eventually corrected.

I have spent some time working with team issues, with most of the effort associated with the Junior Team which is ramping up their activities with many new ideas. The Junior team is expanding in a number of directions and is now reaching more aspiring orienteers. The efforts of all involved are greatly appreciated and will ultimately pay big dividends. I have also continued to work with the people running meets including the IS/IC meet where they rose to the occasion, put on a fine meet and helped the kids "play fair".

Oh, and another project, not directly associated with being President, is related to Trail-O. Setting the US Championship Trail-O at Moreau State Park this year has been an adventure. Choosing the venue, making map changes to adapt a normal O-map to a Trail-O map, and then setting the controls are all time consuming. Getting a good vetter was the most important thing that I did and I hope it all goes smoothly.

Donna Fluegel

Secretary

I set up all the board meetings and the AGM.

I collect all board reports and combine them to include on the OUSA website.

I take and publish minutes from all meetings.

Membership Goal

As of April 30, 2013

Family members (noses)	1172
Family memberships	391
Family Life memberships	46
Individual members	551
Individual Life memberships	128
Student members	64
Junior members	351
Total memberships	1357
Total members (noses)	2138

I have been working on various areas in relation to increasing membership in OUSA and local clubs. This is an ongoing process and to be successful requires input from all clubs, in addition to OUSA leadership. Please contact me if you are interested in working with me on membership or have any ideas. It's time to start thinking out of the box!

I will be evaluating the existing "learn more about OUSA" project and see if this should be expanded or not.

NOD 2013

NOD will be revamped to include additional ways for us to grow membership. I'm suggesting that we follow our friends to our north and change the name to National Orienteering Week (NOW) to give clubs the chance to include mid-week events.

Best Practices

I have been compiling local club Best Practices, sharing them in ONA, and eventually plan to put them on the OUSA website. All clubs are welcome to submit their best practices for all to use. I have not gotten any of these in the last few months. I'll continue to work with clubs on this.

Greg Lennon

- OUSA/Club Services: OUSA membership records are now fully in a hosted database, which has been in use since April. Improvements underway include the automation of assigning member IDs and renewal reminder emails. All OUSA members can now log in to their own member accounts and update their records as well as renew their memberships and make donations; additionally, anyone with an ongoing need for reports

from the database should contact me since we now have the ability to set up a webpage-based (with password) system that allows a person to directly create and download a “fresh” report anytime they need one.

- OUSA/Club Services: An OUSA committee will be recommending guidelines to allow the expansion of certain OUSA services to event producers (i.e. organizations other than OUSA-chartered clubs). As part of this committee as well as another investigating insurance options going forward, I am requesting quotes from insurance agencies based on per-participant activity (rather than “per member”). Bylaw changes to allow OUSA more flexibility in dealing with current and future insurance requirements will also be discussed at this Board meeting.
- OUSA/Club Services: The EventReg registration system developed by Kent Shaw and licensed by OUSA is now in reasonably regular use for local events (C-meets) by both clubs and event producers. The charge to a club to use the system for a one day local meet is \$15.
- OUSA/Club Services: The email distribution system I run that handles the distribution of ONADigital and the (monthly) OUSA eNewsletter is ready to handle significant growth if OUSA chooses to promote them to the members of chartered clubs.
- OUSA/Club Services: I have met with several video producers to discuss the creation and marketing of videos to promote orienteering. Details will be discussed at the Board meeting.
- OUSA/BOD: As the OUSA member participating in the LinkedIn ‘Board Connect for Nonprofits’ program I have begun an outreach program to give OUSA more access to professional advice when needed on various issues.
- OUSA/Teams: With advice from several individuals in the OUSA/Team community, I am organizing for the second year an OUSA MTBO Team to compete in the World MTBO Championships. This year, for the first time, OUSA will field both a men’s team and a women’s team.

***Maiya Anderson and Bob Forgrave
Starts Goal***

1st Quarter 2013 Strategic Plan Starts Strategies and Metrics:

Local starts (sample of 15 clubs):	7,940
A-meet Starts:	1,463

Overall Starts Metrics (Annual Goals)	2013
Local starts:	50,260
A-meet Starts:	8,641

Status:

First Quarter A and local meet starts metrics

A-Meets:

For the 1st quarter 2013 A meet starts and event days are up compared to the averages of 2010-2012.

- A meet starts are up (16.6%) compared to the 2010-12 average
- Event days are also up compared (20%) to the 2010-12 average

Local:

For the 1st quarter 2013 A meet starts and event days are up compared to the average of 2010-2012.

- Local starts are up (29.2%) compared to the average starts for 2010-12
- Local event days are also up compared (2.1%) to the 2010-12 average

The trend shows strong growth in local meet participation with smaller growth in A meet starts compared to the last 3 years. We still have work to do; hopefully increases in local meet starts will translate into increases in A meet starts in the future. But starts are an outcome, not a driving factor. As identified in our January 2013 board report there is a strong correlation between the number of events and the number of starts. This is especially true for A meet starts.

We need to focus on ways to drive more starts per meet (promotion and accessibility) and help clubs hold more meets to increase the total starts.

Scheduling and Planned Program Changes:

We continue to work on the 2014 A meet schedule, and are planning for 2015. There are 8 meets remaining on the 2013 schedule, with 8 events in the planning stages for 2014.

Strategy and Goal:

- Increase starts at both local meet and A-meet levels by at least 5% annually compared to previous years starts.
 - Actively pursue new groups of potential orienteers
 - Work with third-party organizations to host events and expose new people to our sport
 - Expand the “O in Schools” program so that there is a program built from the ground up
 - Work with JROTC, Boy and Girl Scouts, and other national groups

Comparing 2012 to 2011, A meet starts increased 4.1% and local meet starts increased 12.5%. We exceeded our starts goal for local meets and just missed our goal for A meets start growth in 2012.

Other goals:

- Develop promotional tools for clubs
- Utilize social media and online calendars to get the word out on orienteering and orienteering events
- Facilitate the hosting of more A meet and local meets

Updates:

1. Work on general best practice documents for website to help clubs with meet implementation. Donna Fluegel put out a call to the membership to share best practices early 2013.

2. OUSA social media plan developed. The OUSA Facebook page was introduced in November 2012. There are over 500 'likes' so far and we have good interest on the site. Thank you to all who have contributed in this effort...special thanks to Kathleen Lennon for her excellent graphics support and social media advice.

3. Master Calendar: 2013 A-meet and regional meets have been posted on national online event calendars. Calendars will continue to be updated with additional meets in the future (POC: Maiya).

4. Bob completed an OUSA A-meet analysis project in which he surveyed clubs and A meet directors on a variety of questions, please see attached (**2013 A-meet analysis for OUSA**).

Conclusions/recommended actions:

1. Re-evaluate the reasoning behind A-meet goals
2. Look for ways to assist local clubs
3. Look for parallel ways for clubs to assist Orienteering USA

May 2013 Action Plan:

1. Improve National Calendar: Implement programs to help clubs host A and local meets. Continue to contact clubs to stimulate interest in A-meets for 2014 and beyond. Club leadership contacted to solicit interest in hosting A meets in future and to discuss rotating regions to host championship. Working with respective committees to obtain bids for 2014 Rogaine, Bike and Trail-O Championships (POC: Bob and Maiya).

2. Develop/revisit our system for scheduling, soliciting and bidding for Championship Meets with the goal of scheduling championship meets earlier in advance. Consider establishing a rotation of championship meets by region (POC: Maiya and Bob).

3. Working to develop a marketing and training promotion to encourage orienteers to introduce new people to local meets (POC: Bob).

4. Meet Promotion (local and A meet) - Develop best practices and checklists. Distribute boilerplate orienteering article to list of event promotion and other relevant websites (POC: Maiya)

Frank Kuhn ***Volunteers***

- I attended the IOF Joint Council/Commission Meetings in Helsinki, Finland on 18 and 19 January.
- In July I will be attending the 2013 WTOC In Vuokatti, Finland. Clare Durand will be the Team Manager and I will be a Team Official.
- At the WTOC the IOF Presidents' Council is meeting. Peter Goodwin is on the WTOC Open Team and will be at the second day of the WTOC. Since his schedule conflicts with the Presidents' Council Meeting, subject to Board approval, I will represent the US.

- At the United States National Trail Orienteering Championships on May 11th , I will be assisting Donna Fluegel, the Event Director, by handling Registration.
- During the Florida Orienteering Club fall/winter/spring season, I try to attend as many events as possible to work at Registration to solicit new club/renewal members and new OUSA memberships.

Volunteer Strategic Goal

For the goal, I would like to explore with the OUSA Webmaster the possibilities of setting up two web sites for locating volunteers..

Site 1 would be for locating volunteers for openings in the Committees & Task Forces section of ONA. It would be posted on the web site: **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

For openings there would be the position title; details on qualifications; experience: who to contact and how (e-mail, telephone number)

Site 2 would be for locating volunteers for upcoming local events.

It would be posted on the web site: **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS**

For the openings there would be club name; date of the event; location; hours of the event; positions required: registration, trail-o demo set up: front of registration to solicit new club/renewal members and OUSA memberships; course vetters: start: finish: control pick up; who to contact and how (e-mail, telephone).

***Charlie Bleau and Glen Schorr
Non Starts Revenue***

ORDINARY INCOME

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>EOY GOAL</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Contributions (un-res, res, maj gift)	\$10,596	\$59,850	Team USA starting, Annual Fund in Q4
Sponsorships	\$22,697	\$20,000	
Fundrasing (un-res, res)	\$1,885	\$22,850	Team USA starting
Misc	\$1,851	\$7,100	Ins fees, interest, endowment, sales
TOTAL	\$37,029	\$109,530	33% income in, 33% year complete

NOTE: For all ordinary income, 50% income received, 33% year complete

Glen Schorr
Executive Director

FOCUS AREAS FOR 2013

Club Communicator

- Since the beginning of year had two-way communication with 29 out of 60 clubs of all sizes. Includes email, phone and personal communication.
- Continue to write monthly e-newsletter, regular ONA column and other ONA content

Non Starts Income

Sponsorship Strategies

1. Maximize current sponsorship partners (Choice, Hertz, Kentucky)
2. Pursue CVB's and Sports Commissions
 - GJS attended NASC Symposium (April) and plans to attend TEAMS Conference (November)
3. Open new sponsorship opportunities (Garmin, airlines, etc)
 - GJS continued to pursue Garmin after IS/IC.
 - GJS "scouted out" Winter Market to determine viability, will attend Summer Market.

Contributions and Fundraising Strategies

- Continue regular on-line giving opportunity
 - Begin to focus on 2013 Annual Fund
- Provide support to Team USA squads as required.

Marketing and Alliances

- With volunteer support, OUSA Facebook page coming to life providing interesting content in a light-hearted delivery. Currently 525 like our page (passing more established orienteering pages) and individual posts have reached over 2,000 individuals.
- Beginning Public Relations efforts for Team USA focusing on participation.
- Alliance formed with Association of States Games: OK will host orienteering event at Sunflower State Games. Other clubs to express interest: RMOC, ROC.

Day to Day Operations

- Continue to work in close contact with President, Executive Committee members and Director of Membership and Accounting on day-to-day operations.
- At board request, led workgroup which developed Event Producer document, recommending bylaws and policy change. Board to discuss and vote at BOD meeting.
- With President, addressed insurance coverage issue.

Professional Development

- Volunteered to head Mentoring Committee of the National Association of Sports Commissions.
- Seek input from board for additional professional development opportunities



Selecting Reality-Based A-Meet Goals

March 2013. Bob Forgrave, Maiya Anderson

Achievable national goals require a realistic understanding of the situation at the local level, including whether local clubs buy into the goal, and the main local obstacles to achievement of any national goal, if set. Finally, an objective analysis of club metrics is necessary to set a realistic lower and upper boundaries for A-meets, assuming all known obstacles are removed over time.

This document does that for A-meets, using three forms of analysis:

1. A qualitative discussion on Attackpoint
2. A SurveyMonkey survey of more than 25 club presidents
3. An objective comparison of club size and membership against known success factors

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Demographics

The survey encompasses the national orienteering community, from the smallest to the largest clubs, all across the US.

85% of the 34 survey respondents were club presidents, with a smattering of other club officers and some ex-officers. There were multiple responses from each region of the US (Northwest, Southwest, Midwest/central, Northeast, Mid Atlantic, Southeast), with concentrations in the Northwest, Northeast, and Midwest.

Clubs of all sizes responded, from those with fewer than five meets/year to those with more than 20. Concentrated responses were at 6-10 meets/year and >20 meets/year.

There were three large groupings of active volunteers/club. In response order:

- 11-20 volunteers: 13 responses
- 1-10 volunteers: 12 responses
- More than 40 volunteers: 6 responses
- 21-30 volunteers: 3 responses
- 31-40 volunteers: No responses

Demographic observations:

In other words, a third of the clubs barely have enough volunteers to staff a local meet! A sixth of the clubs at the other end of the spectrum have a large and vibrant volunteer staff.

Over half of the clubs (18 of 34) have not had a single A-meet in the past 5 years. Another 14 have had 1-3 A-meets in the past 5 years, leaving only two responding clubs (6%) currently at the often cited Orienteering USA goal of an A-meet/year.

Perceived Club Benefits of an A-Meet

The #1 stated benefits of an A-meet are “a sense of club pride” and “other”, (tied at 11 responses)--even more than “income for the club” (7 responses) or “a new map” (4) responses, which makes a review of write-in responses critical.

Of the write-in responses, the most common perspective was a sense of obligation to the community to put on high-quality events, specifically mentioning the junior audience in two instances. Two clubs wrote in that they saw no benefits. But for some, there was also a nod to high-quality orienteering: “Great orienteering experience for club members in our own ‘back yard.’” NOTE: Because these were unaided selection write-ins, not available choices, their relative rankings if selectable choices would have been much higher. More on this point in the next section.

Reasons for Not Hosting an A-Meet

On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not important and 5 being most important, only three reasons averaged higher than 3, and they are related. Hosting an A-meet requires significant volunteer leadership and reprioritization of activities for a club; it is a lot of work that many clubs are unwilling to commit to. This dynamic cannot be overemphasized. In one respondent’s own words:

“This survey appears to assume that using club resources to hold an A-meet rather than a B- or C-meet is a net positive from the club point of view, assuming that roadblocks (major or minor) can be dealt with. That's an assumption that can certainly be challenged. C-meets are arguably a better investment of club resources; they cater to the club's existing membership and they attract new orienteers.

A-meets, on the other hand, have a lower - and possibly even negative - return on investment, typically burning out core volunteers, failing to attract newcomers, and even seeing existing club members decide not to attend since it's just a more expensive way to run on the same terrain they can run on for lower cost during a regular, local meet.

A rational conclusion for a club is to hold local meets, and let other clubs (preferably nearby ones!) hold A-meets. This leads to a bit of guilt for those who follow the Golden Rule of course. So the real thinking needs to around investigating what will change the A-meet vs C-meet equation if the goal is to get more clubs holding A-meets, otherwise, change the economics to have 3rd parties organize A-meets.”

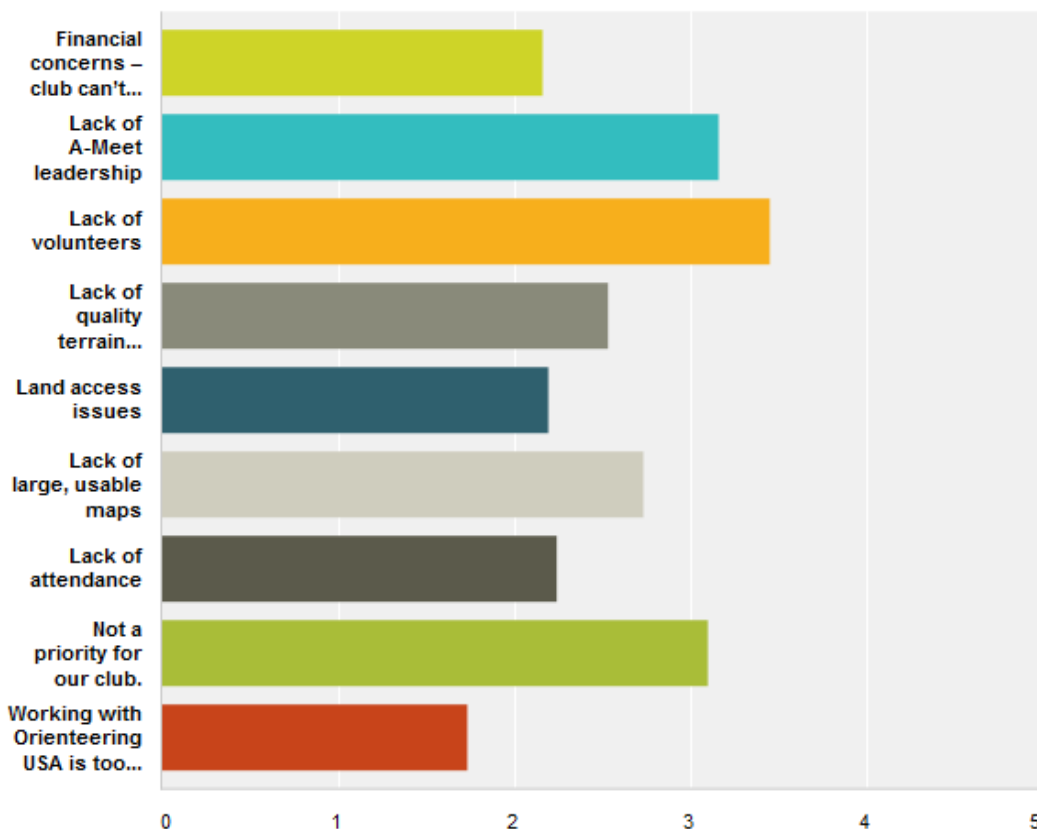
Another echoed the concern about an A-meet goal:

“Most of our club members and meet participants are not very competitive and just do it for fun. *A-meets scare off nearly all of our normal participants.* We have only one or two locations appropriate for an A-meet and either would require remapping. We also don't have the volunteer resources to run an A-meet. However we are considering an A-meet some time in the next few years.”

Attackpoint respondees on this topic were also descriptive:

“It is also fruitful to ask: what are the benefits reaped by a club who hosts an A-meet? For a club with a well-organized marketing campaign, there could be substantial benefits. But, if the meet is a one-off effort and not coordinated with a schedule of local events, then it is *unlikely to do much to grow the sport locally*; the only benefit for club members will be to partially pay for the production of a nice map (assuming you are able to make a nice map in the first place).

“The benefits are mostly for OUSA (financial) and out of town visitors (experiential).”



The two next highest-cited reasons are also related. A large, usable map must have appropriate terrain for an A-meet. Some respondents took this point in the direction of mapping limitations, along with holes in essential volunteer roles:

“I think that our biggest obstacle is getting mappers to make or update maps! Second problem: need some key volunteers to step forward for A-meets. We have joint ventured with nearby clubs for A-meets. We do have a goal of one A-meet/year, but doesn't seem to happen.”

“The single greatest obstacle for my club to holding more A-meets is the unavailability of mappers. The nature of the market necessitates bringing foreign mappers to the US, but this is a delicate issue for individual clubs requiring contracts, immigration, and actually locating help. OUSA should take the lead in employing a centralized mapper whose skills are made available to clubs. Doing so would remove an enormous hurdle. Please contact Ian Smith from NEOC/CSU or Clem McGrath of DVOA for more information.”

“Getting participants to Alaska would be a significant concern. Another concern is having an A-meet quality map(s). We have good terrain but we lack access to experienced mappers. Qualified US mappers are few and far between. And getting an overseas mapper is extremely difficult because of work permit issues (something that the OUSA has stated that they are not interested in facilitating).”

“Suitable terrain is something of a problem; hiring competent mappers is a worse one. We have quite a few volunteer mappers in the club but most of them would probably be reluctant to take on a large mapping product with a rigid schedule on which they'd have to deliver A meet quality mapping.”

This leads directly into a discussion of the types of volunteers, and importance of key A-meet roles that the host club cannot currently outsource:

“We have differing numbers of people who can/will volunteer for various levels of activity. To me, the major cut-off is those who can volunteer to direct a local meet (which for us means doing virtually everything: course design, flag placement, etc.), and those who will volunteer to perform support activities for local and A Meets (such as registration, refreshments, even control pickup).

The relationship to A Meets is that those who can direct local meets effectively, are the pool you have for course design, vetting, and control placement for an A Meet. While you can (and we always do!) get support from other clubs when we host A Meets, these are tasks that pretty much have to be performed by members of the club hosting an A Meet, just by the fact of travel distance.”

“Specifically, we are limited by course designers. Until we can routinely get our best course designers 2 hours out to the middle of our state where the great maps are to do map updates and design and set A-meet quality courses, our hosted A-meets will remain sporadic. We will continue to drive the same distance or less to go to British Columbia for major meets, for all the experience of an A-meet without any ranking value.”

“Our club suffers from a serious lack of volunteers and members willing and able to setup & run events. There are basically 6 of us who do all the work, but we get a pretty good turn out of

participants at our events. Us few are unwilling to put in the extra work and stress of a formal A-meet event.”

Finally, it is important to note that only one item scored under a 2 in importance—difficulty of working with Orienteering USA. This does not imply that Orienteering USA is making an A-meet easier to host, just that, on average, it is not adding to the difficulty in a substantial way. Nobody ranked it as their #1 concern. Complaints about OUSA being the biggest obstacle are the exception, rather than the rule.

“OUSA is seen by the members of our club as a necessary hassle, and not a partner in helping us put on local events and "A" meets.

I suggest you think more about what can OUSA do for the clubs to make life easier for them, and not as a source of income. You can start by providing registration software for local events and a way to collect fees for each club if they need it. Then next would be to help getting base maps and organizing mappers coming so they can share transportation costs over several projects.”

Opportunities for OUSA-Driven A-Meet Change

In the club presidents survey, we also polled for interest in three areas of activity that can help drive A-meets. Interest ranged from neutral to skeptical support. In order of interest level, they were:

1. Co-hosting an A-meet with an independent operator (47% maybe, 16% neutral)
2. A-meet consultant (25% maybe, 38% neutral)
3. Host with another club (23% maybe, 33% neutral, 23% probably not)

In general, these are seen as partial solutions that don't fully address the real problems of conflict with local meets, a dearth of motivated A-meet leaders in key roles, and inability to get top-quality mappers on the timeline required for a sanctioned and scheduled major meets. As one president summed up the local situation:

“We have institutional memory of earlier times with more precarious finances during which we did lose money on A meets and it was a problem. This led to a reluctance to hold non-championship events.

The main obstacle to our holding more A meets appears to me to be not a lack of volunteers but a fear of burning volunteers out if we held more frequent A meets in addition to a busy local schedule.

We are currently preparing a bid in partnership with a neighboring club but it's a very unequal partnership and it complicates things somewhat compared to running everything within a single club. It's not really a model in which I see any advantages that would cause me to prefer it - we're doing it in this case largely because of a coincidence of timing of our clubs having good terrain in the same area on our drawing boards.

I'm not opposed to non-club operators putting on A meets but I'm not sure I see any reason to want to work in partnership with one when we're perfectly capable of holding an A meet unassisted if we have a mind to. - A meet consultants, for aspects other than course planning, sound like a fine idea in general but we have more than enough expertise in-club to run A meets.

Theoretical A-Meet Maximums

There is a natural mathematical allure to calculating the maximum number of possible A-meets if all clubs larger than our smallest A-meet hosting clubs, by some relevant metric, are able to replicate that level of A-meet commitment.

This analysis “assigns” A-meets independently, based upon number of C-meets and number of members (as a proxy for number of volunteers):

	2011 Starts	Club Members	Non-A Meet Days	A-Meet Days	# of Actual A-Meets in 2011	MAXIMUM by # of C-meets	MAXIMUM by # of members
DVOA	3781	408	38	0		1	1
QOC	3228	376	33	0		1	1
COC	3196	301	22	0		1	1
BAOC	2684	244	39	6	3	1	1
NTOA	2327	84	10	0		1	1
NEOC	1940	339	24	0		1	1
ROC	1665	161	22	1	1	1	1
FLO	1556	100	14	0		1	1
GAOC	1526	286	19	2	1	1	1
CAOC	1450	237	18	0		1	1
LAOC	1276	130	15	0		1	1
RMOC	1188	182	21	0		1	1
OLOU	1123	45	20	0		1	1
ARCTIC	1032	91	29	0		1	1
OCIN	985	114	27	3	1	1	1
BOK	880	86	20	0		1	1
MNOC	842	239	19	0		1	1
ALTOS	766	31	5	0			1
COK	749	42	9	0		1	1
SMOC	717	144	16	0		1	1
CROC	701	114	16	0		1	1
UNO	600	60	16	2	1	1	1
WCOC	560	32	14	0		1	1
PTOC	525	51	17	0		1	1
SLOC	513	91	17	3	1	1	1

SDO	483	95	14	0		1	1
NEOOC	421	119	16	0		1	1
TSN	406	63	18	0		1	1
WPOC	358	75	8	2	1	1	1
CNYO	286	18	10	2	1	1	1
EMPO	258	78	9	0		1	1
IRVOC	238	22	12	0		1	1
CSU	235	40	12	3	1	1	1
BGR	191	21	8	0		1	1
BFLO	184	157	8	2	1	1	1
LIOC	153	68	7	0			1
GPHXO	136	48	7	0			1
EWOC	113	24	11	0			1
				TOTAL A-MEETS/YEAR:			
				12	34	38	

Yellow areas represent the minimum club members or yearly local meets used to assign possible meets to other clubs. Our existing number of meets/year would be the minimum. The resulting maximum estimate totals are far above our usual total of a dozen or so A-meets/year (down from about 15 in earlier years).

On the surface, this disparity indicates significant upside in the number of A-meets possible per year. But to make this mental leap is irresponsible, because it ignores several critical realities at the local level:

- 1) **C/A-meet conflict.** There is a fundamental conflict between successful local meet activity that draws in new members to the sport and A-meet activity that provides top-level competition. Clubs that experience a drop in their core function due to volunteer burnout after hosting an A-meet will not continue to host A-meets, making this unsustainable. In one president's pithy words:

"So much work for so few volunteers."

Put another way, many clubs are perfectly happy hosting local meets instead of A-meets:

"We'll be continuing the discussion of how often we ought ideally to hold A meets at our next BOD meeting. I don't know how that will go but it seems possibly if not probable that we will end that discussion where we seem to be now, with most of our core volunteers happy to continue holding an A event about every three years or so an average.

If so, I don't know that there's anything I can do about that, at least while I remain president. I'm considering the possibility that the club as a whole may be immovable on this and that the only practical way to get us holding more A meets might be to recruit some like-minded people within the club into a barebones style A meet organizing group to organize A events, mostly on existing rather than new maps, in years when the club as a whole doesn't feel up to organizing an A meet in the style we are accustomed to hold them."

- 2) **A/A-meet conflict.** As more A-meets become available, participants have the option of forgoing some for others that are geographically closer. More A-meets therefore mean more risk of cannibalized attendance and perception of meet failure after the significantly greater effort of hosting an A-meet. We therefore increase number of A-meets at our own risk.
- 3) **Logical mismatch.** Just because a small club puts on A-meet does not mean that even the same club can put one on every year. In fact, the opposite is far more likely to be true; the club likely identified it as a stretch goal, then spent a couple of years getting all the parts in place. So the assigned meets and total estimates cannot be considered yearly numbers either.
- 4) **Clubs are not homogenous.** They have different mixes of maps, terrain, goals, and volunteers. Assuming that clubs are interchangeable in a cookie-cutter approach is a self-serving approach that significantly damages working relationship with the field. The HQ organization gets perceived as arrogant and out-of-touch.
- 5) **Volunteers and their role are not homogenous.** Currently, Orienteering USA is at a level of maturity where A-meet focused individuals are carrying this activity forward on sheer willpower before burning out. The necessary processes focused on simplifying the A-meet hosting experience do not yet exist.

Conclusions

A-meets provide an unparalleled opportunity for excellent navigational and social activities that enhance the orienteering experience. They are also hugely time-consuming to plan and host.

Clubs that do not host A-meets, including the half of all clubs who have not hosted an A-meet in the past five years, have not taken this position because they are misinformed or need more prodding. They have chosen not to host A-meets—or to host them less frequently—because they fully understand the massive commitment required, including:

- 1) An A-meet director who is willing to devote more than a year to the incremental planning and execution of an event that will become his/her sole focus for months.
- 2) A Mapper who is willing to create a new map or significantly update an older map on a reliable deadline, many months in advance of the event.
- 3) A Course Designer who is willing to have all his courses and every control placement be publically scrutinized by the best navigators in the US.
- 4) A Registrar who must sweat the details of having far too few registrants to make the meet worthwhile, then a tsunami of late and near-late registrations, many with specialized requests or questions about how the process works.

Other volunteers can fill in around the edges, but without this core team, an enjoyable A-meet isn't going to happen. And even with that team, the sheer long-term effort of hosting a one-off A-meet can burnout the most active volunteers in the club, significantly damaging the core mission of expanding orienteering in the general population.

Clubs that deliver yearly A-meets, and especially multiple A-meets per year, have supporting processes for doing so, including a core cadre of committed volunteers who understand the importance of A-meets, stay together, and fine-tune the delivery process from one season to the next. Compare this to an ordinary club's success with an A-meet:

(from Attackpoint) “Kevin T almost single-handedly mapped, planned, recruited, and presented, not just an A-meet, but the 2009 US Championships! Wisconsin's BGR club was host and people are STILL talking about the event in glowing terms. The last time I checked, BGR only had about 15 dues-paying members. All it took was a single dedicated leader.

If you think about it, there are many other examples around the US, of a single motivated person spending a great deal of time keeping their O club running. Some fearlessly step up, and use their energy and talents to put on an A-meet. But a lot of other motivated people don't have that audacity...and instead spend their time behind the scenes, doing less-visible O work: editing a newsletter, cleaning and upgrading equipment, revising map inventories, etc.”

On the surface, this quote represents everything that OUSA wants to see—a dedicated and ambitious A-meet enthusiast, a successful meet put on by a small club, and glowing reviews of the event years later. And yet, it also represents our current national situation well at a club level—non-yearly A-meets, stalled local membership growth, and a constant tension between the extensive volunteer efforts of an A-meet and the essential volunteer functions of a local club.

Conclusion #1.

Re-evaluate the reasoning behind A-meet goals.

It is natural for Orienteering USA to promote the establishment of more A-meets. These represent the high points for orienteering in the US and are necessary to develop the next generation of highly trained orienteering competitors who will carry the US to greater levels of achievement in international competition. These A-meets are also in decline in recent years, eliminating a certain portion of OUSA revenue that is much needed for continuing operations. The situation is dire.

It is also natural for many clubs to oppose the goal of hosting more A-meets. Fundamentally, local clubs have a strong interest in an item that is not even listed among the ten purposes of USOF in Section III of the USOF bylaws. That interest is the addition of new participants to the sport—an activity that is served well by low-key local events and served poorly by highly structured, competitive events, particularly the championships that Orienteering USA needs clubs to host. A-meets are also known to preoccupy or burn out much-needed volunteers, to the detriment of the local club and its members.

The answer to this tension is not for OUSA to educate or convince clubs of the correctness of its own position. OUSA must adapt its goals to allow for both perspectives by re-evaluating the reasoning behind A-meet goals:

- If the main reason behind more A-meets is financial, then OUSA needs to identify sources of income other than an arbitrarily skewed increase in A-meets. (More on this later).
- If the main reason behind more A-meets is competitive, then OUSA needs to identify the optimum competitive schedule for geographically distributed, non-conflicting championships and ensure that these are committed to as early as possible, maybe even years out. Whatever number of events this is—15/year, 18/year—it will be based on actual needs, with lead time for planning, and viewed with less skepticism than an arbitrary obligation per club.

Conclusion #2.

Look for ways to assist local clubs.

For many clubs, the relationship with Orienteering USA is simply one of taxpayer and tax collector. There is a good reason for this, as Orienteering USA operates within the USOF bylaws. Purpose #1 of the USOF bylaws is about asset distribution. None of the ten purposes describe any interest in helping clubs with the goals and challenges of growing local excitement and involvement in the sport of orienteering.

This unhealthy dynamic could be part of the reason that US participation in the sport of orienteering has stalled and is roughly the same as it was twenty years ago. Yet by elevating the importance of USOF Bylaws Purpose #3 about promoting orienteering, Orienteering USA can establish a new level of relationship with clubs that simultaneously accomplishes club and OUSA goals better.

For example, OUSA could help with:

- 1) **Mapping:** Define a way to help clubs obtain and pay for excellent mappers, contingent upon two factors: the map must be used for a future A-meet, and OUSA is paid back (plus 10%) from the revenues of that future A-meet.
- 2) **Registration:** Help guide local clubs to online local registration & payment, either as part of a centralized system or a relatively consistent roll-out of a local system (Club's choice). More local starts = more local start revenue for both the club and OUSA.
- 3) **Event management:** Package the A-meet experience with a high-quality third-party operator so that the registration and meet director roles can be dropped in from afar (with local support) and the only major strain on the local club is delivering excellent courses on familiar terrain. Provide a course consultant to help with that too.
- 4) **Local marketing.** OUSA can't be expected to do any local marketing. But as the official "bureau of information regarding orienteering activities in the USA", it should know the growth techniques that have worked and not worked in its member clubs. It should know how to best grow a small club into medium sized, medium into large, and large into very large. The latest effectiveness guidance should be distributed to club presidents on a regular basis.

Conclusion #3.

Look for parallel ways for clubs to assist Orienteering USA.

Orienteering USA has a revenue problem; clubs understand that. But if the relationship of OUSA and clubs remains fundamentally about asset collection and distribution, there will be continued conflict. OUSA needs to unwind some of the positions that currently place clubs in opposition.

For example, although neither of these has been vetted, here are two ideas:

- 1) **Memberships.** Help clubs gradually move to a model in which their operations are completely supported by their local starts, with no revenues from memberships counted in the local budget. Club memberships then become an OUSA function, either OUSA-lite (no magazine) or full OUSA membership, sold by the club exclusively to support the US teams in international competition, with OUSA teams getting all the revenue equally. Support for OUSA then has a face and visible purpose, memberships are easier to sell, and every club is supporting OUSA without being taxed on this too.
- 2) **National local training.** Don't just encourage clubs to hold fund-raising events—make it happen! Reuse the national event-planning infrastructure on a smaller scale, delivering well-marketed training events with OUSA getting the revenues the first time, and the club every time they repeat that event locally driven.

Conclusion #4 (combined).

Change the OUSA A-meet revenue model.

This is a combination of the above suggestions, focused on A-meets not as an OUSA revenue savior, but as a coherent, pre-defined set of championship meets that must be delivered each year. It expands the sources of revenue for OUSA can rely on, easing pressure on all but the most essential A-meets.

Depending upon how it is rolled out, this approach may result in fewer A-meets, with more of them being the necessary championships. Or, it may result in more A-meets in total because there is more incentive to deliver them, and more clubs with the skills to do so. But most importantly, the intent to deliver them comes from the clubs themselves, not OUSA, for self-driven reasons.

- 1) **Discount the OUSA start fees for championships.** OUSA could also discount the OUSA A-meet start fee if an A-meet is designated as a championship. This makes championships more attractive to host than other A-meets, despite the extra work. The resulting reduced OUSA revenue could be replaced (and more) by shifting income to memberships, as described earlier.
- 2) **Use mappers to drive A-meets.** Paying for A-meet mapping, as described earlier, eliminates much of the up-front cost of an A-meet and encourages A-meets for clubs that want more maps. The decreased revenue from paying nationally for mappers could be replaced by more A-meet income, and more efficient mapper scheduling (NOTE: In case increased mapper availability and efficiency doesn't see like a revenue benefit to OUSA, remember that clubs paying individually for mapper travel take those inefficiencies out of A-meet revenue anyway and even decide not to host major meets because of that club cost. No meets, no fees. Net loser: OUSA.)
- 3) **Charge a la carte for OUSA services.** All meets require good marketing, event management, registration, and results management. But different clubs have different strengths and ability to deliver these. Combined with a discounted based cost for all OUSA A-meet fees, OUSA could charge for these services if needed at an A-meet. Small clubs that need a lot of help can get it (for a portion of A-meet revenues), while learning from experts how to host these functions on their own. Larger club with deep skills, meanwhile, benefit from a lower overall fee and enjoy more profitable A-meets.
- 4) **Blur the line between local and A-meets.** Most of the skills needed for an A-meet are also needed for a large local meet. These same services offered for A-meets could also be delivered (for a fee) for local meets, starting with online registration and marketing. These go hand-in-hand, as promotion must not exceed the ability of the club to register participants and print maps. Not only is local registration a completely new revenue stream, but helping clubs move from 50-participant local events to more structured local events with 100 or 150 participants lessens the fear of an eventual leap to a 350-participant A-meet.

The bottom line is that the growth of our sport is dependent upon the efforts of dozens of understaffed all-volunteer clubs. They all have a passion for local orienteering, and many have individuals who appreciate A-meets, but only a few clubs are organized to routinely host and deliver A-meets with excellence. Changing that dynamic will take time and continued focus, as clubs ramp up skills and capabilities in a supportive, guided environment.

The good news is, Orienteering USA is uniquely positioned to deliver that focus, in coordination with clubs, by being a supplier of optional, fee-based services to those clubs. Unlike a tax, which can feel like taxation without representation, a fee-based service is optional, allowing it to demographically shift to clubs who value that service. Once the club has grown into a skill, the fee for that service drops away, replaced by the OUSA revenue that comes with increased starts.

JTESC recommends that OUSA continue Erin's contract for a second year

Erin has put forward a long-term vision for OUSA that is in sync with its mission and strategy:

- Sustainable local programs with paid staff working with hundreds of kids
- The USA reaching the podium at JWOC and WOC
- An OUSA certification program available to all physical education teachers in the country

Erin's first-year goals were designed to take an initial step toward this vision. We are seeing tangible results: new efforts in clubs to develop local programs and trainings; increased junior activities and seriousness at A meets and a commitment to training; a 24-person standing team; full men's and women's teams to JWOC this year. In response, other people in our community have begun to step up and take on issues like safety, public relations, and fundraising. Erin's philosophy and approach is coaching for the whole child and represents a radical change in how we train coaches and work with kids.

We recommend the following for Year Two goals:

- Continue the direct coaching of elite teams (JST, JWOC)
- Continue consulting with clubs on local programs for juniors
- Deliver a curriculum for working with children; plan first implementations with clubs
- Create a new coaching certification system for working with children

We have these requests of the Board:

- Help support Erin's vision. Be clear with the community that he is doing more than coaching elite juniors; he is providing a vision aligned with OUSA's mission that will grow the sport and bring in the money that OUSA needs for sustainability.
- Give junior development one third of the Executive Director's time. This is a good investment because by developing income from local programs for kids, and teacher certification, we propose to greatly increase OUSA's income and power to carry out its goals.
 - Seek sponsorship and grants. Not for supporting elite athletes, but seed money for programs focused on children's health and well-being (like Adventure Running Kids). We would commit to meet weekly and provide guidance for the ED.
 - Help communicate with clubs and administer the junior development program.
 - Coordinate broad public relations efforts
 - Coordinate development of guidelines and policies on youth safety in orienteering
- Formally review Erin's progress against goals at the same time that other employees are reviewed, to ensure alignment and improve our programs.

Please see the reverse side of this sheet for a summary of Erin's progress against the one-year goals in his contract.

JTESC, May 2013

Summary of progress against one year goals for first 7 months

Green: met or surpassed. Yellow: on track. Red: At risk.

> 40 kids on the Development Team	22 so far
12 boys and 12 girls on Standing Team	Done
JWOC team members volunteer with younger kids	Course reviews; more
Full teams at JWOC	Done
2 training camps attended by 20 kids	9 events attended by > 100 kids
Junior activities at 4 A meets	Done: at 8 A meets so far
Logging, coaching, speed for top juniors	Well on track
Quarterly reports	Delivering monthly reports
Great communication with JTESC	Done
Meet face-to-face with 6 clubs r.e. development	Done
Coaching clinic	Done at GAOC meet in January
Personal career development	Has two mentors

For details, please see Erin's monthly reports, which are posted on the Orienteering USA website and at AttackPoint.

In addition, please visit the new USA Junior Orienteering Information website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/junioroteams/>

From this website, you can see our plans for the summer trip, training logs for the standing team, IOF's anti-doping rules, the training and competition schedule, and more.