

ORIENTEERING UPDATE

Australian Orienteering Championships, Tasmania

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Long Distance

The Australian Long Distance Orienteering Championships is the blue ribbon event on the Australian Orienteering calendar. It has been run and won every year since Orienteering was introduced to Australia in 1971. This year the Championships were held outside St Helens in Tasmania and over 800 orienteers turned up to try their hand.

On paper the women's race looked to have assembled the strongest field. Local girl wonder Hanny Alston should have been the big favourite, fresh of her 6th place in the senior World Champs (whilst still being eligible to compete as a junior). But Alston had been having a few problems with an ankle injury and some erratic form, so the race was looking wide open with lots of challengers queuing up to knock Alston off. Swede Anna Danielsson, NSW's Tracy Bluett, and Alston's Tasmanian team-mates Grace Elson and Danielle Winslow looked the most likely to challenge for the title judging from pre race form.

The Australian Championships was held in steep rocky terrain that tested all aspects of an orienteer, running strength, agility in the rough terrain, and most of all lots of fine map reading. Those conditions proved to suit Alston's Orienteering skills perfectly. Despite the pre race talk of it being an open affair, Alston proved it to be a one horse race winning by the impressive winning margin of 5 minutes. After race analysis shows that Alston went out hard and took an early lead, she then made a significant navigational error which handed over the lead to Grace Elson. At the half way point Alston regained her lead, she made one more navigational error later in the course, but her superior running strength in the rough terrain showed, and she extended her lead all the way to the finish. In second place came Alston's Tasmanian team mate Elson, and former Tasmanian Clair Hawthorne rounding out the minor places, making it a great day for the Apple Isle.

The men's race also looked like being a close race on paper with in-form Dane Rune Olsen, New South Welsh men Eric Morris and Robbie Preston, and myself going into the race as the men to beat. Through analysing split times after the race you could see that the race was a close fought battle over the first half with the lead seesawing between Olsen and myself. In the second half of the races I managed to continue to run strong and navigate close to perfectly whilst Olsen faded, and I finished with a comfortable 9 minute victory ahead of Preston and Morris. The victory was very sweet for me as it was my first national title after 20 years of trying, and almost certainly my last as I am retiring from top end competition after this year.

Sprint Distance

The day before the Long Distance Champs, the Sprint Distance Australian Championships were held in the township of St Helens. The race was held in the town a parks and city streets, and suited the orienteer who could make quick decisions, combined with a fast flat running speed. The Sprint Distance Championships is a new championships only been held for the second time this year, it may not have as much tradition as the long distance champs, but it is still a



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National Championships and there were a lot of people chasing victory.

As it turned out no Australian managed to win the National Champs! Swede Anna Danielsson, and Dane Rune Olsen both took close victories. Danielsson had a stable start to her race and was posting times just behind the leaders for the first half, at the 8 minute mark of the race she took a small lead and held it all the way to the finish. Early race leader Grace Elson took second place 4 seconds down on Danielsson, a further 2 seconds back was Tracy Bluett of NSW.

In the men's race Olsen went out hard, and opened up a 10 second lead at the 2minute mark. He held his advantage through the entire race, the Dane tired a little over the closing stages but held on to win by 3 seconds. Second place ended up being shared by Eric Morris and myself, both recording a time in the same second.



Hanny Allston

Junior Wonen (6.5km)		
1. Jasmine Neve	VIC	61:57
2. Kellie Whitfield	WA	68:06
3. Sarah Dunnage	WA	72:18
4. Zebedy Hallett	SA	75:20
5. Kate Rea	VIC	76:26

Sprint Distance Championships

Men (3.2km)		
1. Rune Olsen	VIC/DEN	13:50
2 (equal). Grant Bluett	ACT	13:53
2 (equal). Eric Morris	NSW	13:53
4. Ben Rattray	SA	14:10
5. Kerrin Rattray	SA	14:36
6. Mark Lawson	NZ	14:42
7. Bruce Arthur	VIC	14:45
8. Gareth Candy	ACT	14:46
9. Robbie Preston	NSW	14:47
10. Adrian Jackson	VIC	14:56

Women (2.9km)

1. Anna Danielsson	ACT/SWE	15:34
2. Grace Elson	TAS	15:38
3. Tracy Bluett	NSW	15:40
4. Danielle Winslow	TAS	15:43
5. Julia Davies	QLD	15:48
6. Kathryn Ewels	VIC	16:01
7. Clare Hawthorne	VIC	16:08
8. Jasmine Neve	VIC	16:37
9. Briohny Davey	NSW	16:49
10. Catherine Murphy	NSW	16:52

Junior Men (3.2km)

1. Ryan Smyth	TAS	14:53
2. Simon Uppill	SA	14:54
3. Thomas Reynolds	NZ	14:55
4. Dave Meyer	NSW	15:09
5. Christopher Naunton	VIC	15:17

Junior Women (2.9km)

1. Kate Rea	NZ	16:02
2. Lizzie Ingham	NZ	16:04
3. Erin Post	WA	16:08
4. Sarah Dunnage	WA	16:50
5. Mallory Hughes	SA	17:23

Long Distance Championships

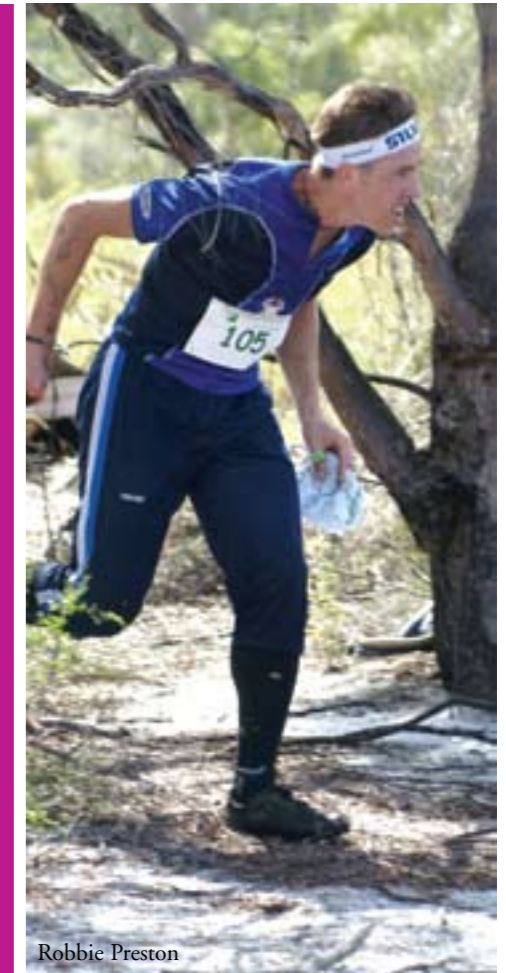
Men (13.1km)		
1. Grant Bluett	ACT	93:25
2. Robbie Preston	NSW	102:38
3. Eric Morris	NSW	104:22
4. Ben Rattray	SA	104:58
5. Rune Olsen	VIC/DEN	107:24
6. Craig Dufty	WA	108:46
7. Kerrin Rattray	SA	112:41
8. Andy Hogg	ACT	113:27
9. Lachlan Hallett	SA	113:37
10. Peter Preston	NSW	113:49

Women (8.5km)

1. Hanny Allston	TAS	69:14
2. Grace Elson	TAS	74:10
3. Clare Hawthorne	VIC	81:09
4. Zoe Radford	SA	86:06
5. Danielle Winslow	TAS	88:37
6. Cath Chalmers	WA	89:51
7. Julia Davies	QLD	90:56
8. Wendy Read	QLD	91:21
9. Briohny Davey	NSW	91:34
10. Hania Lada	VIC	91:36

Juniors Men (9.9km)

1. Dave Meyer	NSW	76:41
2. Chris Naunton	VIC	80:25
3. Simon Uppill	SA	80:26
4. Louis Elson	TAS	80:49
5. Lee Andrewartha	TAS	81:22



Robbie Preston



Anna Danielsson



Hanny Allston



Rune Olsen