

## PRESIDENT

Preparations for the 2025 Canadian Orienteering Festival are in full swing: mapping, course planning, venue permissions, banquet arrangements, web-site creation, t-shirt design, volunteer recruitment, people keeping everything on track, etc. etc. Hundreds of hours have already been put in, with more to come.

As we get nearer to the events, there will be MANY other volunteers needed for tasks that require limited, if any, orienteering experience. So, if any of you have ever been inclined to see what goes into putting on these larger events, consider keeping an eye out for the call for help that will go out this year, and consider volunteering

THE AOA Executive Director (ED), Bogi Gyorf, has continued her efforts to expand orienteering beyond Edmonton and Calgary. I am hoping that the interest shown by many in Red Deer and Airdrie in the programs she has created will continue, and grow.

### **2024 Alberta orienteering highlights (from my perspective):**

- FWOC put on the Alberta Champs in 2024, and which year was also a special occasion, being the AOA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Thank you to everyone from FWOC (and one or two from EOOO!) who were involved. Especially as you had to navigate some extremely stress-inducing last-minute, externally-caused, changes. From a competitor's point of view, everything went seamlessly.
- Thanks also to the Edmonton volunteers who came out in less-than-ideal driving conditions in early December 2024, to help at the AOA casino. The next AOA casino will be in Calgary, in the third quarter of 2026.
- The new and improved air quality policy, which provides Alberta event officials something substantial to use to decide the safest procedures in the event of poor air quality due to forest fire smoke.

From my perspective the AOA is in good shape: we have an excellent ED in Bogi, and are healthy financially. As the AOA ED, Bogi is working hard to expand orienteering into other regions of the province, to provide opportunities to children and adults wanting to see what orienteering is all about, all the while providing support to the clubs as needed.

### **The President's Role:**

1. With the Board and input from members, set strategic direction for the Association.
2. Ensure sufficient resources (human, financial, infrastructure) to ensure effective delivery of Association programs;
3. Represent the Association and advocate on its behalf;
4. Support the efforts of Orienteering Canada

**AOA board activities this past year:**

- As well as the regular on-line monthly meetings, the AOA board held its annual in-person strategic planning session in Red Deer
  - Reviewed strategic plan, identified priorities for 2025, and developed 2025 budget;
- Air quality policy – because of the probability of times of poor air quality, the AOA board developed guidelines to help event officials decide what to do if air quality is a potential health issue during their event. The first version was updated and re-issued based on feedback from its use in the 2024 season.
- Funding:
  - Successful grant application to the Alberta “Every Kid Can Play” initiative (\$30,000 to be equally split between Calgary, Red Deer, and Edmonton programs);
  - Received close to \$80K from the 2024 casino;
  - Still (deliberately) running a deficit in 2025 to promote programs.

**2025 priorities:**

- Support events for 2025 Canadian Orienteering Festival (COF 2025);
- Decided to focus on highest priority activities in 2025 given the big effort to put on COF 2025;
- Support the current AOA 3-year strategic plan objectives (based on Orienteering Canada’s current strategic plan):
  - Increased awareness of the sport of orienteering
  - Seamless sport delivery system
  - A strong and unified orienteering community
  - Organizational excellence;
- Continued support of developing a Red Deer and Canmore orienteering community.

Kim Kasperski  
President, Alberta Orienteering Association