

Statement and Rationale for QOC Meet Fee Increases Fall of 2020

Hopefully all QOC members and families are surviving the COVID 19 restrictions in good health and good spirits. As orienteer's, even with the statewide group limitations, many of us have been able to get out in the woods individually to run, walk or stroll and practice our navigation skills while getting some much needed exercise. Orienteering is not like baseball - we don't need a big team to play, but it is a competitive sport and when we know that others are out in the woods trying to best their time on a course, it pushes us to improve our performance and make better route choices. Like you, the QOC Board and Officers are looking forward to the date when we will be able to resume local orienteering meets in some form or another, but for now we will have to wait to see whether the state and local park authorities are going to permit large group activities going into the fall.

QOC is one of the largest Orienteering clubs in the United States and it is certainly among the most active, if not the most active, in terms of the number of local meets held annually. Since its founding more than 50 years ago, QOC has been extremely fortunate to have attracted a very dedicated group of volunteers who do everything from mapping, field checking, course setting, e-punch operations, printing, permitting, accounting, web site and data base management, scheduling and all of the other tasks that are necessary for local events to occur and for the club to thrive. As a non-profit corporation, QOC's primary purpose is to educate its members and the public about the sport of orienteering, to develop map reading and land navigation skills, and to increase the enjoyment of natural resources, and respect for wildlife and the environment.

Being a non-profit, volunteer driven organization, does not mean that QOC can operate without financial resources. The club has to pay for equipment, park permits, facility fees, printing, paper, supplies, insurance premiums and mapping software, web hosting, etc. - and the cost of these items has been increasing year after year. In addition, while the club has been able to depend for many years on the volunteer services and mapping expertise of numerous club members, it has been increasingly necessary in recent years to contract for mapping services to be able to expand into new venues and keep the existing map inventory up to date.

Up until a couple of years ago the annual membership dues and meet fees generated were sufficient to cover QOC's normal operating expenses and generate a modest surplus. However, for the past two years the club has experienced a budgetary shortfall with expenses exceeding annual revenues. Fortunately, the budget shortfalls were able to be absorbed thanks to surpluses built up in prior years and due to the added income generated from successful national meets sponsored by the club with the support of many volunteers. The national meets generated a surplus largely because the club relied on the services of volunteers to map the venues.

In light of these trends, the QOC Board of Directors, undertook a thorough analysis of the club's finances and operational needs, and has concluded that meet fees and club dues need to be raised in order to sustain our existing level of activities and cover anticipated costs going into the future. In evaluating and adopting a new fee structure the Board considered a number of different plans. Ultimately, the Board opted for a plan that is understandable and simple to administer and strikes a reasonable balance between the fees that members pay and the fees that junior participants, non members and family groups pay. The Board sought to keep fees for juniors at the current low level and set a rate for recreational/family groups that would not create obstacle to their participation and exposure to the sport - recognizing that juniors and groups are essential to the future of the sport and the club. Juniors

accounted for 16% of all starts in 2019, non-member adults accounted for 21% of all starts and groups were nearly 12% of all starts in 2019.

The new QOC fee structure that will be implemented beginning with the 2020 fall orienteering season, or whenever we are able to get permits and resume holding local orienteering events) is listed below:

	Existing Fee	New Fee
Adult QOC Members (individual or group)	\$5	\$10
Members of Reciprocating OUSA Clubs	\$5	\$10
Junior Orienteers both Members and Non-members	\$5	\$5
Adult Non-members (individuals) plus epunch	\$15	\$20
Non-member Groups (two or more persons) plus epunch	\$15+	\$30
ePunch Rental	\$5	\$0

Generally, beginners and groups do not have epunches, so the elimination of the e-punch charge basically helps to offset the fee charged to groups. Eighty-five percent of the groups attending events do White, Yellow and Orange courses, as do the overwhelming majority of all non-member participants. The average group size last year was approximately 3 people.

In addition to the meet fee increase, which has been adopted by the Board, the Board is recommending a modest \$5 increase in the annual membership fees that will have to be voted on by the members, whenever we are able to hold the general membership meeting and election of officers :

Individual Members	\$20	\$25
Family Members	\$30	\$35

The new meet fee structure, coupled with the increased membership fees, will enable to club close the revenue gap in the annual operating budget and hopefully generate between \$7,000-\$8,000 in additional revenue to be used for expanded mapping projects and equipment replacement . Because the last few months of the spring 2020 Orienteering season had to be cancelled due to the COVID 19 restrictions, current members will have their existing membership term extended for three months, thereby delaying the effective date of the dues increase.

The Board has taken these actions in order to secure the club's finances and it's ability to sustain the quality and frequency of our local events. If you have any questions or concerns about the new fee structure, please relay your comments or concerns directly to me and I will see that they are relayed to the entire Board. Lastly, I would like to commend the Board members for their diligence in addressing this issue and for their sincere efforts to serve the long term interests of the club and its members.

Jody Landers, President
Quantico Orienteering Club.