

# OUSA 2025 Junior Nationals Coach and Parents Guide

*Adapted from Georgia Orienteering Club*

March 14, 2025

**All school coaches/parents/guardians are asked to please personally review this document with your juniors.**

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**Important weather note from 3/14:** North Texas is currently under a **Red Flag warning** and conditions are expected to continue for the next two weeks, including our event weekend. This means that there is unusually high risk for wildfires due to very low humidity and very high wind gusts. We will be monitoring the situation closely.

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Welcome, cadets and students, to the Orienteering USA Junior Championships!

North Texas Orienteering Association wishes to provide all competitors with a wholesome and challenging orienteering environment within the guidelines of Orienteering USA's rules. We also want to ensure our meet is consistent with orienteering's long tradition of fair play, honor and respect for the environment.

Many junior competitors may be new to national orienteering competition. **We cannot overemphasize the need for junior competitors to follow the orienteering rules and etiquette contained in this handout.** Many participants have spent hundreds of dollars to participate in this event. Their success this weekend factors into their national OUSA ranking, which for some of them ultimately determines selections to national and world cup competition teams. Any serious breach of fair play or course etiquette that might nullify a competition course or individual's performance could be extremely costly.

Orienteering rules of etiquette you must be familiar with and follow include:

**General rules:**

- Always check in at the Finish and Download Station, even if you do not complete a course. Checking in can avoid a long and expensive search. There is a 3-hour time limit on the courses – that means be back by the 3-hour mark, not just heading back then.
- Visit the controls in order. The course is designed to be challenging at your ability level if you go in order. You won't gain any advantage by going out of order. Your

Ecard will indicate any deviation from your assigned control order, and you'll be disqualified.

- Please respect off-limits and out of bounds areas, such as private residences or fenced-off maintenance areas. Avoid running through campsites when possible.
- When using e-punch, check the code carefully before you punch. Unless you're using the new Air technology, hold the finger stick in the box long enough to hear it beep once and/or see its light flash. Otherwise, your "punch" may not have been registered in the system and you won't get credit for it. One beep is sufficient.
- If there is no beep or flash, the electronic punch may be malfunctioning; if so, punch your map with the pin punch attached to the control flag to prove that you visited the control. The same applies if the electronic punch is missing.
- Please don't litter. Water cups at water stops, candy wrappers and other trash should be deposited in the trash bag provided.

### **Sportsmanship**

- Competitive orienteering is an individual sport. Don't offer or ask for assistance to others. You should only ask for assistance if you are completely lost or injured and plan to quit the course by returning by the most direct route to the finish.
- Don't shout or make excessive noise in the woods. Shouting "It's over here" for instance, helps your competitors as much as your friends and it is disturbing to people who wish to find the controls legally.
- Move away from a control after punching. Don't sit at the control, particularly water stops, and socialize. Again, you are assisting your competition by drawing even more attention to the control.
- DO assist an injured competitor. If another competitor is hurt and in need of assistance, help to the best of your ability or go to summon help. Report the injured competitor's bib number and exact location to officials at the Finish or Start line.
- Don't tamper with controls. If a control marker has fallen, return the control to the original height if possible. Tampering with or vandalizing any control marker or interfering with another competitor will result in disqualification for you and your team and may result in exclusion from future competitions.
- Water stops are important for preventing dehydration. Don't deprive other competitors of water by leaving water bottles uncapped to spill over. Take only what you need and move away. Exercise good hygiene by using a clean cup provided. Do NOT drink directly from the containers. You may want to consider carrying your own water bottle or camelback.

### **Safety**

- We strongly recommend wearing a watch and carrying a whistle on course. However, whistles are ONLY used to summon help in a serious or life-threatening emergency. The emergency signal is three short blasts. Don't blow your whistle if you're simply lost, unless the courses are closed. If you're lost after the courses close, you're already disqualified, and it is an emergency. Please blow your whistle then so we can locate you before it gets dark.
- Dress appropriately for the conditions. The terrain at Sid Richardson Scout Ranch, as described in the course setter notes, feature rocks and cacti. Wear long pants and gaiters to protect your legs. And consider the weather: Current forecast calls for warm (high of low 80s F/27C), sunny, very windy and dry.

Thanks for participating in our event!

Marc Macauley

Meet Director