

FOUR GAOC JUNIORS

SELECTED TO NEW JUNIOR STANDING TEAM

Congratulations to

Austin Fowler, Connor Frost, Matt Stout, and Barbara Ziolkoski!

Orienteering USA recently identified and selected the 12 most talented and promising young men and the 12 most talented and promising young women from around the country to join the brand new OUSA Junior Standing Team. National Coach Erin Schirm will be working closely with this select group of juniors to train, coach, and monitor progress in preparation for JWOC (Junior World Orienteering Championships) selection and for travel to Europe this summer to compete in several international meets and training programs.



Matt Stout, Connor Frost, Austin Fowler



Barbara Ziolkoski

AUSTIN FOWLER:

In December of 2011 Matt Stout convinced me to go orienteering with him. He told me it was running while thinking. I figured since I'm always thinking while I run anyways, why not? Well I liked the sport so much I tried white, yellow, and the special event orange relay that they had that day. From then on I went to a couple A-meets and won some and then won some regional races.

I think the best time I've ever had orienteering was at the 2013 Extreme-O after the Georgia navigator cup. I was running with Matt and we were doing very well until control 7 where we ran to the wrong side of a lake. But instead of running back around we took the shorter route straight through the four foot deep water in the 40 degree weather. Although our legs felt like freezing wooden sticks and we were the Popsicles, it was the most fun I've ever had.

I am from Lawrenceville, Georgia and I go to Brookwood High School. I also run track, cross country, and I love riding dirt bikes with my dad.

CONNOR FROST:

My dad introduced me to orienteering in the 7th grade. Unlike any other sport I'd ever seen, orienteering combined the concept of a mental challenge with a physical competition. Cross country and track had never really held my interest as sports, but Orienteering with its consistently different races and environments always provided a novel challenge.

My first real accomplishment in the sport was a 2nd place finish at the 2008 Southeastern Interscholastic Championships in Mistletoe State Park. The achievement may seem meager to me now, but at the time I beat out competition that on average was a few years older than me, so I figured I had some talent. Over the next few years I climbed the ranks, moving from Orange to Green to Red, being in the top of my class each time. Now, five years and a near uncountable number of local, interscholastic, NJROTC and A-meets later, I'm looking at the path to JWOC, the end-all be-all of junior championships

MATT STOUT:

I love orienteering because I get to be outdoors, hang out with friends and be physically challenged. I got into orienteering because my Spanish teacher talked about her son, John Williams, winning loads of awards. At about the same time my mom's friend recommended orienteering because it involves both running and outdoors.

My best memory of orienteering was on the last Extreme-O after the GNC. Austin Fowler and I went to the wrong side of a lake because a clue read the left side of an island. We thought this meant the left side of the lake so we went to that side. Then, we realized that and did not want to run all the way around the lake again. So we chose to swim across the lake. This worked because the lake was shallow with a thick layer of mud. However, the temperature was 40-something degrees outside, so it was cold, to say the least.

I am from Gwinnett County, Georgia, right outside of Atlanta. My hobbies include Cross Country, Track and Field, and Boy Scouts.

BARBARA ZIOLKOSKI:

In August of 2010 Barbara Ziolkoski teamed up with Orienteering Coach, Duane Adams, to start a team at Francis Marion Military Academy. She made some calls to recruit others, and made a training schedule (2 hours per day for a week). Then she found a competition with Florida Orienteering at the Agricultural Museum in Palm Coast and made arrangements to take her team there.

This was the beginning of FMMA's Orienteering Team, of which Barbara has been the Captain ever since. The team has posted some great wins (presently National HS and JROTC Varsity Champions), but as an individual she's had some outstanding results. 1st Place, Day 1, ISVM, 2013; 2nd Place, U.S. Ultra-long Championship, 2012; 1st Place, F-20, U.S. Night-O, 2012; 1st Place, U.S. Middle Distance Championship, F-20, 2012.