



Big 5 O-Week

Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape

South Africa



29th December 2023 – 3rd January 2024

Bulletin 1

Programme

Date	Region	Terrain	Event	WRE*
Thu 28 December 2023	Plettenberg Bay	Forest / Farmland	Warm-up Training	
Fri 29 December 2023	Clarkson	Forest / Mountain fynbos	Day 1 - Long	
Sat 30 December 2023	Plettenberg Bay	Forest	Day 2 - Middle	WRE (Middle)
Sun 31 December 2023	Harkerville	Forest / Coastal fynbos	Day 3 - Long	
Tue 2 January 2024	Harkerville	Forest	Day 4 - Long	
Wed 3 January 2024	George	Urban / Parkland / Forest	Day 5 - Sprint	WRE (Sprint)

* WRE – IOF World Ranking Event for M21E / W21E categories

Region

The Big 5 O-Week organising committee, together with the South African Orienteering Federation, invite you to South Africa's sixth international five-day orienteering competition. Each day of competition takes place on a new map, with a rest day on 1 January. The events will take place on the country's southern coastline, in the Western Cape province. Registration and the focal point of the 5-day competition will be centred on the seaside town of Plettenberg Bay about 500km east of Cape Town, famous for its sandy beaches and rocky peninsulas. The region is bordered by the Outeniqua mountains just inland from the coast, with a mix of indigenous and pine plantation forests in the foothills. The flora of this area form part of the Cape Floral Kingdom, one of the reasons that this coastline is often referred to as South Africa's 'Garden Route'.



Organisation and Information

Event Director: Nicholas Mulder

IOF WRE Event Advisors: Ian Bratt (RSA) and Paul Wimberley (RSA)

Event Office Contact: info@bigfive-o.co.za

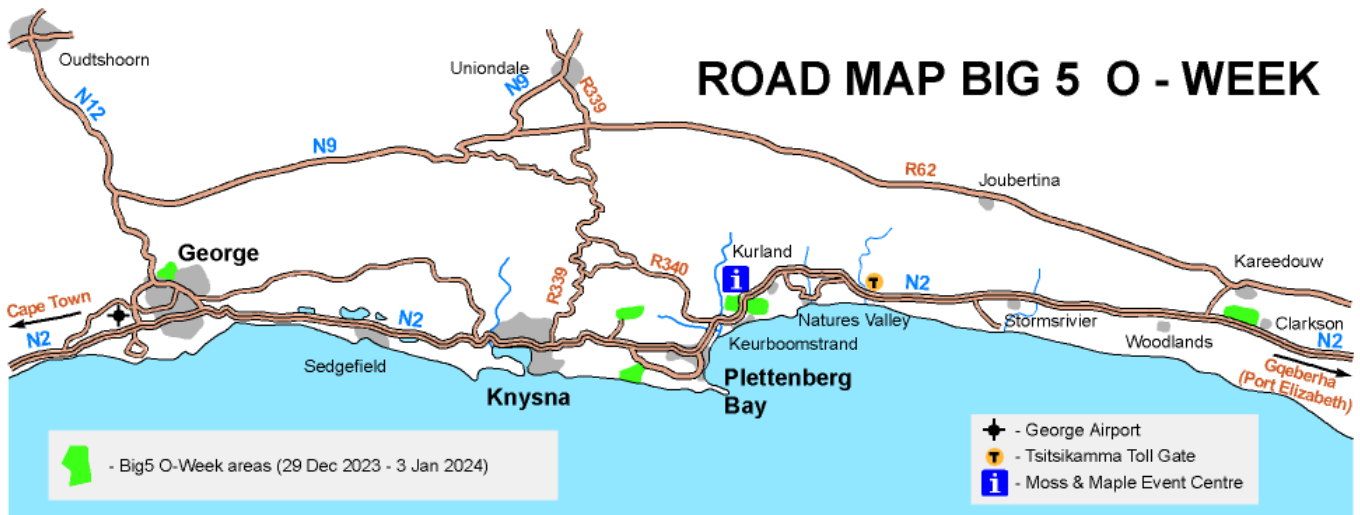
WhatsApp: +27-82-905-2588

Website: <http://www.bigfive-o.co.za>





Registration, Event Centre and Accommodation



The Event Centre for Registration will be the Moss & Maple Restaurant and Farmstall, 12km to the east of Plettenberg Bay. It will be open on Saturday 28 December 2023. On competition days, registration will be at the competition venue during competition hours.

Participants are urged to organise accommodation early as December is South Africa's primary holiday season. The event organisers recommend finding accommodation in the Plettenberg Bay region or in the surrounding area between Harkerville in the west and Nature's Valley in the east. Accommodation further afield is not recommended due to slow travel times during the holiday season. Accommodation bookings at hotels and resorts normally open one year in advance.



For accommodation in the region visit <http://www.bigfive-o.co.za> or: <http://www.pletttourism.co.za/>

Embargoed Areas and Maps

All areas that are used for the Big 5 O-Week are embargoed. No competitors are allowed in the competition areas until the start of the day's event. All 5 areas in the Big 5 O-Week have never been used for Orienteering before and will make use of new maps surveyed in 2023. Information on the exact location of areas will be released in mid-2023.



Day 1



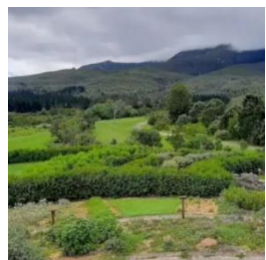
Day 2



Day 3



Day 4



Day 5



Training

The Garden Route region does not have any current orienteering maps and the nearest orienteering areas with regular events are near Cape Town. Please see regular updates to www.bigfive-o.co.za for latest news and details concerning other races in South Africa in the period before and after the Big 5.

A training map near the Event centre (Moss & Maple Restaurant) will be open on Thursday 28 December 2023 (scale 1:10'000, 5m contours). This training area is a mix of terrains, most closely representative of days 2 and 3 but also relevant to days 1 and 4. Maps will be provided with approximately 12-15 control flags in the terrain. Maps can be bought from the organisers online together with entry, or at registration on the day for R50.00.



Terrain



Days 1, 2, 3 and 4 take place on terrain that is part of a coastal shelf between the Indian Ocean and the Outeniqua and Tsitsikamma mountain ranges. Elevation is about 200-250m above sea level. These areas are a mixture of fynbos scrub, pastureland, indigenous sub-tropical forest and pine plantation forests. Pine plantations and pastureland areas are generally very runnable, whilst fynbos scrub, either in the open or as undergrowth in a forest will slow you down. Indigenous forest tends to be fairly dense and slow going.

Day 5, used for the sprint event, is a complex mix of parkland and urban area, with some sections of pine plantation with mixed undergrowth. Part of the map will be in a botanical garden. Runnability is generally very good. Altitude is about 250m above sea level.

Climate

The competition takes place during mid-summer. The climate average for Plettenberg Bay has highs of 27°C and lows of 16°C. The ocean can have a cooling effect, so a southerly wind will bring reduced temperatures and wet weather, whilst a north-westerly wind can bring hot, dry conditions with temperatures in the mid-30s. The region has year-round rainfall, with about 80mm a month in December and January.



Competition Classes



M12, M16, M20, M21E (elite), M21L (long), M21S (short), M35, M40, M45, M50, M55, M60, M65, M70, M75, M80, M85.

W12, W16, W20, W21E (elite), W21L (long), W21S (short), W35, W40, W45, W50, W55, W60, W65, W70, W75, W80, W85.

Open Long, Open Middle, Open Short.

On-the-day entries: only on Open Courses.

Groups: are welcome on Open Courses.



Distances: Please see the Big 5 Website for distances for each class. These are approximate and are subject to change and revision upon course finalisation in mid-2023.

Age groups: As the Big 5 O-week bridges two calendar years, we allow 35+ age group participants to enter age groups as per their age in 2024. For 20- age groups, competitors can enter as per their age in 2023.

Category changes: Changes in category are possible until 30 November 2023.

WRE: M/W21E (Elite) category has World Ranking Events for Day 2 (middle distance) and Day 5 (sprint), with single-day entry possible on these days. The organisers reserve the right to move competitors to M/W21L should this class be over-subscribed, or they feel that the entrant is not sufficiently qualified to compete in M/W21E.

Prize Giving, Prizes and Mementoes



Prize Giving will take place at the finish after Day 5. All finishers of the full 5-Day competition will receive a commemorative memento. Prizes will also be awarded to the first three positions in each age category after 5 days. A competitor's final 5-day placing will be determined as the best 4 events out of a possible 5 based on points scored each day. A competitor's daily score is based as a percentage of his or her time against the class winner's time, with the winner receiving 1000 points.

Punching System

The EMIT punching system will be used for all 5 days. EMIT cards can be hired when entering online.



Clothing Restrictions

There are no clothing restrictions for orienteering in South Africa. However, leg protection is advised for days 1 to 4, as the fynbos scrub and undergrowth is quite sharp and prickly. On day 5, longer courses may encounter a short section of forest where leg protection could be useful.

Hazards

There are no dangerous animals in the competition areas, although competitors may encounter various species of buck, jackals and other small mammals. Snakes (including venomous ones) are found in the areas but are uncommon and will usually move out of a runner's way. No incidents have been reported due to snakes in similar areas used for Orienteering in South Africa in the last 40 years. Plettenberg Bay and the entire Cape region is not in a Malaria area.

Shop

High quality branded T-Shirts and other memorabilia will be on sale, featuring the Big 5 logo 'South Africa 2023/24'. Various types of compasses balanced for the southern Hemisphere will also be on sale. Online sales will be taken on the Big 5 entry page at <http://www.orienter.co.za>





Social Evenings

Various social evenings will be included in the event programme and feature a range of entertainment and activities. Further details will be announced in early-2023, but the activities will possibly include:

- A social braai (barbecue) on one of the evenings
- A final festive dinner evening on the final night
- A pub quiz evening
- A social drinks and snacks function for members of the **Big 5 Club**, who have competed in five or more Big 5 O-Weeks over the years.
- A fun novelty orienteering event on New Years Day, ideal for the whole family

Entries

Entries and payment will be taken online via the OriEnter system (<http://www.orienter.co.za>). This can also be accessed via the Big 5 event website (<http://www.bigfive-o.co.za>). A receipt will be issued if requested. Tour leaders can enter and manage all individuals in their group entry on this online entry system as well.



There are 3 entry deadlines, with discounted entry fees for earlier entry. Juniors (in categories M/W20 and younger) also receive lower entry fee levels. Entry costs are shown on the website and applicable for the date of payment.

Competitors entering by the 1st or 2nd entry deadline for the full 5-day event will receive a FREE Big 5 technical t-shirt.

- 1st entry deadline: 31 May 2023
- 2nd entry deadline: 30 September 2023 (including any orders for compasses, extra t-shirts)
- Final entry deadline: 1 December 2023 (no t-shirt)

Late entries will be taken at registration on all event days but will be limited to the Open courses only.

Groups may participate on the Open courses but will receive only one free Big 5 t-shirt if entered by the requisite 2nd entry deadline. Additional t-shirts may be purchased.

Transport and Travel Logistics



No official transport is offered. International competitors are advised to hire a car from a recognised car rental company.

South Africa has international airports in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. The nearest international airport is Cape Town (CPT), 500km to the west of Plettenberg Bay.

George (GRJ) 100km to the west and Port Elizabeth / Gqeberha (PLZ) 240km to the east, both have domestic airports that are serviced by numerous airlines and car rental companies. Plettenberg Bay (PBZ)

also has a small airport, but it is only serviced by a single airline, Cemair.



There are numerous low-cost airlines in South Africa. See SA Airlink <https://www.flyairlink.com>, Fly Safair <https://www.flysafair.co.za/>, and Lift <https://www.lift.co.za/en> for options.

Cemair is another airline <https://www.flycemair.co.za/> which flies direct into Plettenberg Bay.

The website <http://www.travelstart.co.za> has a nice price comparison across multiple airlines.

Tourism

The Western Cape region is one of the premier tourism destinations in South Africa. The Garden Route region hosts a vast array of landscape, cultural and natural attractions. It's spectacular coastline, indigenous forest, rugged mountains and bird and wildlife all attract international tourists. The area is currently developing it's own wine estates whilst it's culinary experiences are excellent. There are many options for adventure tourism in the region, of which orienteering has now been added to the menu.



Recommended places to see and things to do near the event locations will be listed with links on the Big 5 website: <http://www.bigfive-o.co.za>

Visas: Most visitors to South Africa are not required to obtain visas in advance. For further information visit https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visa_policy_of_South_Africa . Please contact Big 5 office for a letter of invitation if needed in support of a visa.



Final Details

Final race information will be sent via email to entered competitors in the first week of December 2023.

This event is organized by the Big 5 Orienteering NPC under the auspices of the South African Orienteering Federation and the International Orienteering Federation.

For any further enquiries, please visit www.bigfive-o.co.za

or contact the Event Office at info@bigfive-o.co.za.



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Results, Bulletins and Online Entry.

