



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORIENTEERING CANADA ANNOUNCES 2014 RISING STAR AWARDS

April 30, 2014 (Vancouver) – Orienteering Canada is delighted to announce that Pia Blake and Damian Konotopetz are the recipients of the 2014 Orienteering Canada Rising Star Award. Pia and Damian were chosen from a strong group of athletes, nominated by the community and self-nominations, by a selection committee. Both Pia and Damian will receive a cash prize of \$1500 each, which will contribute to their travel and competition costs.

Pia Blake is a junior athlete from Whitehorse, YT who has been orienteering since she was 7 years old. Pia moved from Whitehorse to Trondheim, Norway, and then to Llantwit Major, Wales to complete her schooling and improve on her orienteering. This will be Pia's second year representing Canada at the Junior World Orienteering Championships. You can learn more about Pia on her [Athlete Profile](#).

"I am so very, very grateful to Orienteering Canada for funding this award, and through it helping Canadian orienteers to attend orienteering events and training camps both in Canada and abroad", said Pia. "I hope that with the help of this award I will be able to continue to grow as an athlete and to improve as an international competitor, and then to bring that experience back to Canada!"

Damian Konotopetz has been competing in orienteering ever since he won races at the Asia Pacific Orienteering Championships in 2002. Damian has represented Canada 6 times since 2009 at the world junior, senior, and university championships. He is trying out for the 2014 World Orienteering Championships in Italy in July. You can find out more about Damian on his [Athlete Profile](#).

"I am very grateful to receive this award", said Damian. "Thank you to the many people who have supported the HPP program over the years and to the volunteers who make the program run smoothly. This award will help me out financially to achieve my goals in orienteering."

The Rising Star award is presented by Orienteering Canada's High Performance Committee (HPC) on an annual basis. It is typically awarded one female and one male member of Orienteering Canada's High Performance Program (HPP). The goal of the award is to recognize up and coming orienteering athletes, and assist them with the high training and competition costs associated with high performance sport participation.

The High Performance Committee would like to thank the selection committee for their time, energy, and efforts. The selection committee this year consisted of Hans Fransson, Wil Smith, and Meghan Rance.

Follow Pia and Damian, as well as their HPP athlete team mates, during the 2014 race season on their blog at <http://teamcanadaorienteering.blogspot.ca/>

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For more information, please contact Alison Price, Chairperson of the High Performance Committee at 604-960-1840, or email hpp@orienteering.ca