

# UNSW Outdoors Club President Report 2024-25

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It's been another busy year for UNSWOC, full of both our regular activities and some exciting new initiatives. From O-Week to AGM, we've continued to grow as a community that is adventurous and passionate about the outdoors. This report reflects on our achievements, the challenges we've faced, and the amazing contributions from our amazing memes, exec and leaders who have given their time and energy to make the club what it is today.



## The Beginning

We began the new exec year with the obvious: A meeting! It was wonderful to have a mix of returning exec and completely new faces joining. As a group, we came up with some goals for the year and enjoyed getting to know each other over some pizza. Goals that were discussed included the following:

- Increasing new member numbers amongst UNSW students
- Improving training and encouraging more new trip leaders
- Improving member retention to encourage more long-term club members
- More social events branching out of the usual club events
- Improved Ledge retention
- More efficient exec meetings (they always go overtime)
- Commit to exec attendance at the Ledge and encourage interactions with new members

It felt like a very promising start to the year ahead with a supportive team who were eager to begin. The exec then voted in our two vice presidents and we were ready to go!

The following is a summary of some of the key events, activities, and happenings in the club over the past year:

## Arc: Gabriel

O-Week:

O-Week is always an important time for us as it's when we can show up on campus wearing harnesses full of gear and ask people if they have ever been outside before (someone has said no, which is odd because they were standing on a sunny patch of grass). Gabriel and the O-Week volunteers did a fantastic job to inform new students on what the club is all about with very friendly, conversational demeanors. It is always extremely rewarding to later see the people we met at O-Week coming along to the Ledge and expressing excitement at getting more involved with the club and going on trips.



Some of Our T1 O-Week Stall Volunteers  
Pictured from Left to Right: Marley, Sophia, Gabriel

### Launch Week:

We decided to give Launch Week a try this year but to limited success. Early in the term, the clubs are invited to run a stall or activity to help gain new members. Unfortunately our table was located at the bouldering wall, which whilst on theme is also quite far from busy walkways. We were able to chat to a handful of students, but decided that if we were to run this again, we would definitely need a better spot and maybe a game or two to throw at interested students.

### Arc Sport Awards Night:

We were lucky enough to be nominated and to win (!! ) the Arc Sports Student Life Award for the second year in a row in 2024. The club “earned recognition for fostering an inclusive environment and organising enriching experiences like camping and abseiling, many of which are firsts for students, especially international.” Our vice president Oliver also won the Doug Crawford Sports Recognition Award which is awarded for actively supporting the club for a minimum of five years. He has served on the past five exec teams and we are very appreciative of his ongoing dedication to the club.



UNSWOC Receiving the Arc Sport Student Life Award.

Pictured from Left to Right: Amelia V, Gabriel, Oliver, Craig Davies (presenter), Caity, Sophia

## **Events:** Sophia, Emily, Amelia V

### Standard Club Events:

#### Exec Weekend Away:

Exec Weekend Away involves the incoming and previous year’s exec spending a weekend away together to bond and plan. We were at Jervis bay again this year and had a lovely weekend climbing at the very picturesque Point Perp as well as spending an evening making fun of Vertical Limit over tacos.



Some Exec Weekend Away Snapshots

### Olympic Watch Party:

2024 saw climbing back at the Olympics and the club enjoyed some climbing at the Ledge whilst watching the competition take place.

### Ledge BBQs:

Every term we have our Ledge Welcome BBQ to greet the new club members and catch up with old friends. It's always a busy night with a great atmosphere.

### She-Can:

We collaborated with the UNSW initiative She-Can near the end of 2024. UNSWOC ran a Learn-to-Climb social activity at St Peter's where participants learnt all about the sport. A couple of them later went on to join the club.

### T-Shirt Comp:

Our annual T-Shirt Design Competition took place over the Summer holidays with the winning design going to Danny Burton! Anyone can request to purchase a T-shirt, tank top, or crop top at the Ledge, the gear cupboard, or by messaging an exec.



Danny's Winning Design!

### Story Night:

This event was held at the Flodge in May of 2025. We managed to completely fill the back room with club members excited to hear some interesting stories and chow down on free pizza. A great variety of fantastic tales were told from mountain peaks to cave depths. It's always lovely to gather around and hear about the adventures our fellow club mates get up to.

### Boree Log AKA Mud Log:

Our most anticipated event of each year, the bi-annual Boree Log was a great success (if you ignore the cancelled Sunday trips and rainy Saturday evenings). The events team did a wonderful job organising and dealing with all the chaos, as did the gear team who always have a huge job of organising, transporting and sorting everything we might need. Their job also continued into the following weeks as they chased down gear and dried off all the wet items.

On both weekends, the event was held at Mt Wilson, Cathedral Reserve Campground with people breaking off during the days for climbs, hikes and canyons. Saturday night saw Chef Hamza whipping up delish feasts which he was kind enough to do for both Boree Logs of the exec year. Emily ran the Punch of Punishment events, each time encouraging hilarious goofy tales to be told to the wider club, and often received the punch for her own antics. There were also a variety of costumes with the term 3 and term 1 themes being Hectic Hollywood and When I Grow Up, respectively. Sophia did an excellent job with a lot of the behind the scenes organisation of the weekend, making sure everything went to plan and we were well prepared.



Boree Log Trips. Clockwise from Top Left: Serendipity Canyoning, Mezzaluna Sport Climbing, Porters Pass Hike

We have been quite unlucky with the weather during the past few Boree Logs. By now, the exec team and trip leaders and no strangers to a wet, drizzly weekend but we are hoping for clear skies for the next one!

### Awards Night

Awards night rolled around again and was held in December at The Glebe Hotel. Everyone rocked up in their fanciest formal wear for some Kahoot trivia, and to congratulate this year's photo competition and award winners. We got to see lots of stunning photos, listen to some Beanie Grant pitches, as well as appreciate those who have gone above and beyond in their dedication to their sport or contributions to the club.

### Reel Rock

New year, new Reel Rock! We were lucky enough to receive a code for discounted tickets and organised for club members to meet up so we could watch it all together. We enjoyed some pizza, wine, and gelato before heading to the Ritz. Three amazing films were shown this year: Death of Villains, Riders on the Storm, and The Cobra & the Heart. This was a great evening out and hopefully the dinner beforehand also becomes part of the Reel Rock tradition.



Pre-Reel Rock Social Dinner!

### New Club Social Events:

There was a lot of interest in non-Ledge social activities and it would be great to see more of these taking place next year. However, as the Events Officers have a lot on their plate, it would be wonderful to have more non-exec club members organising social activities. As long as the event is approved by the exec (a quick message or chat about your idea will do), there should be no reason we can't have more epic club social events. There have been many ideas thrown around, such as speed-belaying (like speed dating but belaying!), painting sessions (e.g. paint a rock), campfire sing along, tie-dye club shirt making, international zoom story night and social, just to name a few. Some of the fantastic new events run this year were:

#### Trivia

The events team, along with the help of Hugh, ran a very successful trivia night at the end of 2024. We managed to completely fill the back room of the Flodge with teams of UNSWOC members battling it out with their knowledge of the outdoors and the history of our sports. There was a lot of positive feedback and it was a great way to get people more involved in the social aspect of the club, especially the non-climbers.

#### Welcome to the Club Social Hike

In 2025, Sudarshan took the lead on running a big introductory social hike. We had almost thirty people who were all excited to get to know one another and see what the club was all about. There was a big procession chattering away as we made our way from Engadine to Loftus. This event was a fantastic success and was lovely to have so many people keen to get outdoors and get to know the club. It's something we should definitely keep running in future years.

## Games Night

We ran two games nights this year at Wayward Brewing Co. who were kind enough to host us. They were great events that got people chatting and we saw a lot of new club members, as well as those who aren't keen on climbing or able to make it to the Ledge on Thursdays. It was nice to get to meet so many new club members and get to know them over some games.



Games Night #1

## Slip 'N Slide

Emily organised two Slip 'N Slide events at Narabeen that were a lot of fun for everyone who came along. It was great to have club members meet up to socialise and enjoy a day in the sun and hurtling down sand dunes.



Slip 'N Slide #2

## **Gear: Amelia K, Harry, Zhiheng**

Our lovely gear officers have been very busy this year and consistently doing amazing work in making sure all the club's gear needs are met. Our Head Gear officer, Amelia, has put in a lot of her time and energy into organising gear for all our big trips and events (such as Boree Log and training weekends), as well as maintaining the gear and keeping on top of what needs to be replaced. She has organised multiple gear stocktakes as well as been the main contributor to adding items to the new Booqable system. This has made it a lot easier for members to book and pay for gear, as well as for the gear officers to keep track of who has what. It has indeed been a big improvement over the epic excel spreadsheet of the past.

Our gear officers Amelia, Harry, and Zhiheng consistently showed up every Thursday to open the gear cupboard, often staying overtime to help club members who were running late or when there was a big line of people waiting. They also opened the cupboard outside of the Thursday gear hour throughout the week, showing great dedication to the role. They were excellent at keeping on top of this very busy task, whilst also juggling all the other aspects of the role.

## **Safety: Caity, Oli**

In 2025, we ran a Remote Area First Aid course for trip leaders and TLITs, equipping them to handle a wide range of potential injury scenarios. There were no major incidents this year, and we remain committed to continuing to build our safety awareness across the club.

## **Socials: Jisu, Sudarshan**

Jisu started us off with some amazing content on the club instagram page. With artistic flair and engaging posts, it was always exciting to see what she came up with. Sudarshan later took over the role in 2025, always making sure to showcase recent trips and make sure everyone knew what events were coming up.

## **Sustainability: Caity**

There have been a few sustainability initiatives this year as the club. At Alford's Point, we had a crag clean-up when the Australian Climbing Association reached out after noticing we were running a trip there. The climbers removed a lot of rubbish from the area, most of which appeared to have been thrown from drivers on the nearby highway. A few club members also took part in a beach clean-up to help protect our coastal environment. We hope to keep increasing sustainability efforts in future, as other tasks often take priority and can limit the time available for these important initiatives.

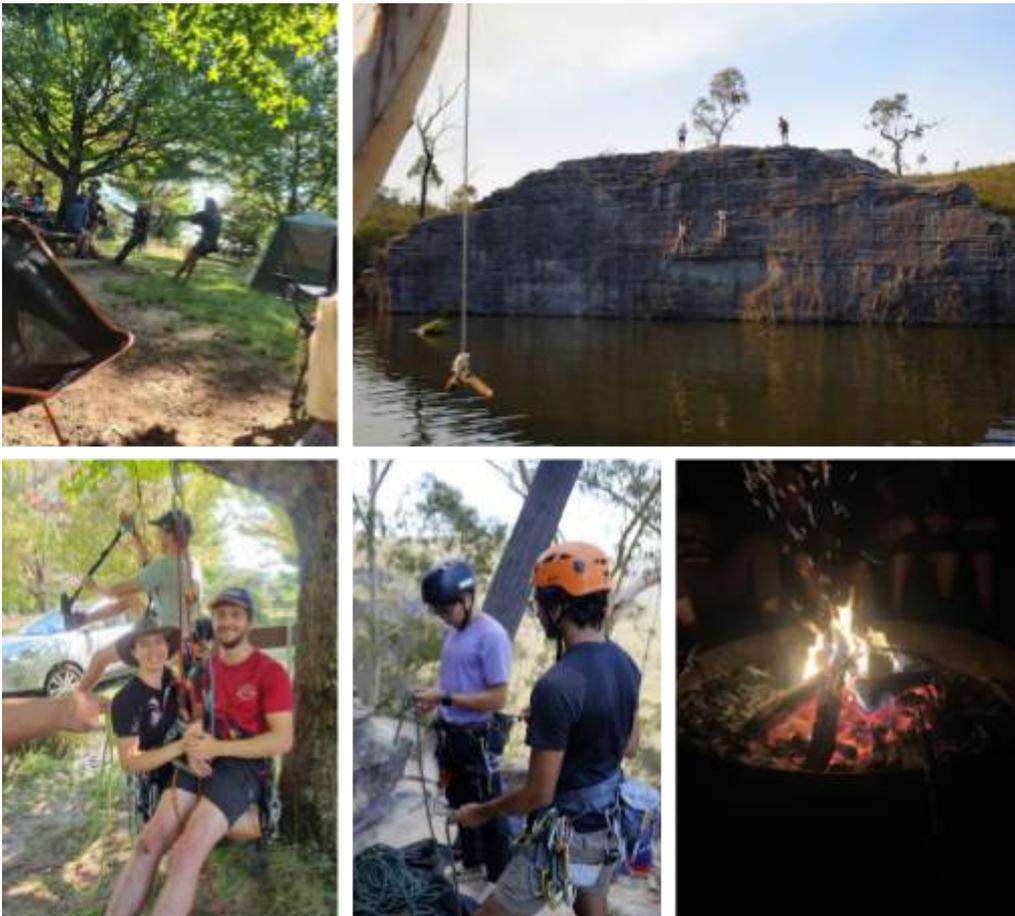
## **Training: Jemma, Gabriel**

Jemma started us off as our training coordinator for term 3, 2024. She organised a variety of skills workshops to take place over the term, as well as ran a Trip Leader in Training (TLIT) induction. This helped to get lots of keen new trip leading recruits started on their training. She sadly had to leave the exec at the start of the new year, but we are all very proud of her as she went off to start her new job in the airforce!

After a handover process with Jemma, Gabriel went on to take over the role. He started off term 1 strong with an amazing turn out at the Trip Leader Training Weekend. This initiative

ran once under the previous exec team, and this year we decided to make this an event that would take place every term. It will run as a full weekend in terms 1 and 3, whilst a smaller day event or workshops will run in term 2 depending on interest.

This training weekend was found to be a very valuable and worthwhile use of time to upskill current and upcoming trip leaders. The term 1 event had separate climbing and canyoning groups learning skills on day one, then putting their skills into practice the next day. The term 2 training session was a one day crag session with climbing and caving skills being taught. Outside of these technical skills, Gabriel gave an insightful overview of the soft skills that are needed to be a successful trip leader in the club. We are hoping future training weekends go on to cover more sports and skills. In particular, a snow skills training weekend would be a welcome addition to term 2 to get snow trips back into the club's trip schedule.



New Skills and Fun Times on the Term 1 Trip Leader Training Weekend

## **Treasurer: Jayden**

Our Treasurer, Jayden, has done an excellent job this year, keeping our finances well organised, and strategically planning for the year ahead.

This year, UNSW Outdoors Club has maintained strong financial stability, ending with a float of \$50,418.25 which is comfortably within our target range of \$40,500–\$54,000. Membership fees remain as our primary income, supplemented by Arc funding and small grants. We invested significantly in gear (\$14,245.38) and training (\$9,303.98), supporting both safety

and skill development. The new gear system has reduced losses, enabling us to purchase lots of new gear, especially for caving. With funds set aside for upcoming beanie grant trips, the club is well-positioned for continued safe and sustainable growth.

### **Trips: Stephen, Amelia V**

This year, Stephen applied a new process to creating the term trip calendar. It involved an in-person meeting at the beginning and midpoint of the term to create 6 week blocks of trips. This had varied success. It helped to get people keen on their trips for the term and was easier to pair people up when they were in the same room. It also allowed for more TLITs to get an idea of the term trips and be part of the conversation. The only downside was that not everyone can attend an in person meeting, and it was a lot more difficult to get numbers during the middle of the term when people were more busy.

In term 1 of 2025, we had the largest number of trips for a Boree Log in many years, perhaps of all time! This allowed us to have almost 130 participant spots. It was fantastic to have so many attendees and get everyone who was keen to come along to the event.

A Womxn canyoning rigging trip was run by Margot and Ange in 2025. It was great to see such a supportive environment created for females and non-binary members to build their skills out at Kanangra.



Womxn Canyoning Rigging Trip at Kanangra

In the second term of 2025, Sudarshan organised a collaborative hike with Wandersoc. There was a fantastic turnout and attendees hiked through the Porters Pass and Colliers Causeway track in Blackheath. Hopefully we have many more collaborative trips with other clubs in the future.

It has also been wonderful to see a return of kayaking to the club with our activities in the sport being spearheaded by Adam. It has been quite some time since we have run regular kayaking trips and it has been wonderful to see members take to the sport both outdoors and in the pool sessions.



ANZAC Day Long Weekend Kayak Trip

Something to note is that there has been a lack of advanced trips in the club for a few years now. This has been brought up by both the more experienced members in the club, as well as some trip leaders. The topic was also discussed many times in exec meetings. In future, it may be helpful to have the trip levels taken into account during the creation of the trip calendar. This should hopefully ensure there will be intermediate-advanced trips running each term, and allow the club to cater for a larger range of skills on our weekend trips.

As a club that runs on the dedication of volunteers, I am incredibly grateful to all our trip leaders who consistently give their time, energy, and expertise to running trips. Their patience, generosity, and commitment to the club is truly inspiring. Whether they're guiding first-timers or supporting more experienced members, they always ensure to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. It is due to all their hard work that so many of our members have had the chance to build skills, confidence, and gain new experiences they would never have had otherwise. They are truly the heart and soul of the club and could not be thanked enough for their efforts.

## **Web: Sudarshan**

Sudarshan has been a fantastic web officer and is constantly updating the site with new features and interesting info!

Lots of work was done on the website behind the scenes, with trip leaders now able to see participants' past trips and comments, as well as their trip approval ratio (it's an option to be ticked in your booking viewing settings for the trip leaders who haven't seen this yet). This has greatly helped trip leaders to get a better sense of a participant's previous experiences, as well as to prioritise those who haven't been on as many trips. Work was also done to include a trip leader's level to be on their profile. This was incredibly helpful to the trip and training coordinators, allowing them to have a complete record of someone's skill status and to pair up suitable leaders as teams for trips.

There has also been a multitude of new content added to the front face of the website. The winners of previous Awards Night Photo Competitions can now find their photos displayed, giving insights into what the club has been up to over the past several years. Old club cards that were missing from the exec info pages were hunted down to add to the exec info page and can be found displayed next to their respective exec. Sudarshan also added the names of more previous exec teams to be acknowledged for their work in building the club up to what it is today. He also put a lot of work into digitising old club records which make for some incredibly intriguing reading. Photos from trips dating back as far as 2003 can be found, as well as trip lists from the 90s! I would highly recommend having a readthrough in spare time.

## **Other Notable Mentions:**

### **The Ledge**

UNSWOC is incredibly lucky to have the Ledge as our weekly climbing gym. It's the perfect place to meet new people, get in some climbing, and learn new skills. Pete Butcher has been incredibly accommodating and has allowed us to use the space for many years now, for which we are very appreciative.

### **Shutdown Scare**

At the end of 2024, we were notified about the closure of the Ledge Climbing Centre as Sydney University Sports no longer wished for the gym to continue operating. This was incredibly sad as our Thursday night social climbs and pub dinners are a core part of the club's operation and community. The staff of the Ledge worked very hard to change USYD Sport's mind, and UNSWOC organised a petition that was spread to other clubs and to the wider climbing community. It received a whopping 864 responses, of which 486 also included a written testimony detailing what the gym meant to the signer. Past and present executives from outdoor sports and bouldering clubs across Sydney also wrote letters. The Ledge was not meant to open for the new year, but through the efforts of our amazing communities, the closure date was pushed back time and time again, until we ended up with confirmation that the gym would remain open for the foreseeable future. We are very grateful for this and thankful to everyone who signed the petition or wrote a letter.

## Setting Workshop

Gabriel is currently employed as Head Setter at the Ledge and was kind enough to run a route setting workshop for any keen club members looking to give it a go. The upstairs bouldering area was completely taken over, with holds spread across the floor and many eager club members putting up their route creations. This workshop was a great success and it would be wonderful to run another sometime in the future. I'm sure everyone walked away with a deeper appreciation for the intricacies and difficulties that the Ledge setters, Gabriel and Tahlia, face in giving us our weekly climbing challenges.



The Ledge Setting Workshop

## Admission Price Increase

In 2025, there was a gym price increase for UNSWOC members from \$6 to \$8.

## Introduction of MPIO and Grievance officers

Arc Sport introduced the requirement for there to be a Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) and a Grievance Officer in each club. This past year Jayden has filled the role of MPIO after receiving training from Arc Sport, and Caity has acted as the Grievance Officer. It was decided that moving forward, the exec would decide in their first meeting which among them would take on the additional Grievance Officer role. We hope to have more people qualified for the MPIO positions after future training sessions.

The MPIO is there to listen to issues raised by members, provide advice, and to refer them to the right place for a resolution. They provide information about a person's rights, responsibilities and options to an individual making a complaint or raising a concern, as well as information support during the process. They do not handle complaints or investigate grievances, and they don't mediate between members or stakeholders. They are an impartial party who is there to help guide people in the right direction.

The Grievance Officer is an exec member who handles complaints or conflicts in the club. This can include things like bullying, discrimination, harassment, or feeling ignored. Usually, they try to help sort things out informally by hearing both sides. If it can't be fixed that way, they follow ARC's formal grievance process and recommend solutions to the exec team. They don't handle serious crimes which need to be reported to the university or police. Examples of grievances they might deal with include unfair treatment, inappropriate jokes, or lack of inclusivity. The Officer must stay neutral, communicate clearly, and know when to step back if they're too involved or in the case of a conflict of interest. More information can be found on the Arc website.

## **Constitution Update**

There have been a number of updates to the constitution to address sections that were vague, not relevant to our club, or previously missing. Oliver took on the task over the past several weeks and other exec members also helped to contribute or give feedback on the modifications. The new constitution has been significantly revised to better reflect the needs and operations of our club, moving beyond the original generic ARC Sport template.

The updated constitution will be put to a vote at the 2025 AGM. If approved, the final document will be published on the club website.

## **Private Trips - Trip Leaders**

We have put in a new trip leader benefit in place for active trip leaders. If someone leads two trips in a term, or six in a year, they will be able to run a private trip with the approval of the exec. This means they will get club gear and insurance to cover an adventure of their choice. They will also be required to write a trip report within four weeks.

## **Challenges:**

Like any volunteer-run organisation, we've had our share of challenges this year. One of the biggest was maintaining consistency within the exec team. Busy schedules, unexpected commitments, and occasional burnout meant that some roles were left without consistent coverage at times. This required flexibility and teamwork from the entire committee. Special thanks must go to those who stepped up to take on additional responsibilities, some covering multiple roles at once, to ensure that the club ran smoothly and members were able to experience everything that makes the club so incredible. While it wasn't always easy, these experiences have shown how resilient and resourceful our team can be. It also helped to teach us valuable lessons to pass on to future executives. The passion and commitment of the exec team, as well as our trip leaders, is what keeps the club running. I am incredibly proud and thankful of everyone who stepped up this past year and did what they could to help out.

## Closing Remarks

I'm incredibly proud of what we have achieved this year as an exec team and as a club. Despite challenges, we've continued to foster such a vibrant, welcoming and amazing community. We've brought together so many students, alumni, and members of the public to learn and grow in outdoor sports, and created a space to connect, built on a shared passion for the outdoors. I'm looking forward to seeing what the next exec team brings. Hopefully there's lots of fresh energy, new ideas, and the drive to keep building on the many years of volunteer efforts and initiatives. With their enthusiasm and dedication, I'm confident the club will continue to thrive and I am incredibly excited to see what will happen next!