

PUNCHLINE

Dandenong Ranges Orienteering Club Inc

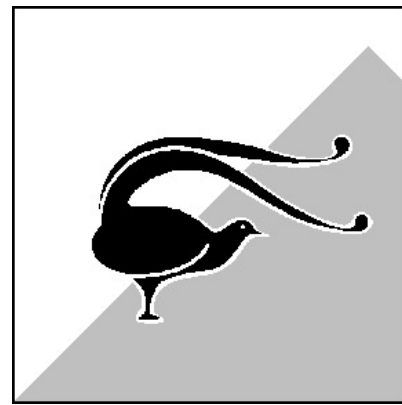
www.droc.orienteering.com.au

Incorporated Association Registered Number A0003225B ABN 76 002 329 218

NEWSLETTER

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VICTORIAN CLUB RELAYS

The Club Relays once again saw success for DROC, with our Men's and Women's 21B teams taking out first and second place, and our M55's in 4th place in a very strong field. It was great to see our first timers doing so well, especially on tricky courses in very hot conditions. Allan Miller got the M21B team off to a good start, then Dave Gorman and Ian Davies ran two of the fastest legs on the course to bring them home ahead of the DROC Dead Gorgeous combo of Louise Hall (2nd fastest leg of the course), Debbie Dodd and Pam King. Graham Wallis, Peter Yeates and Peter Grover were more consistent than most, and improved their position with each leg. Tina Smith, Denise Pike and Pat Miller finished 8th in the Mixed category.

DROC joined forces with the Tuckonie and Central Highlands clubs to run the event - one of the biggest on the 2008 Victorian calendar. While TK and CH looked after overall organization, entries, and course setting, we had the vital job of all things Sportident, Finish and Results. Relays are complex beasts to organise, with many last minute changes to teams, a number of interstate competitors, and the National League relays being run in conjunction with the Club relays. We underwent quite a learning curve, which will stand us in good stead when it comes to our role in the Australian Championships Carnival in 2009. More on that next issue.

We'd like to thank everyone that helped out on the day, and also Yarra Valley club for use of a wonderful map, and especially Jim Russell (Bendigo) as Controller, for his hard work, advice, patience and good humour.

Tina and Pam in the mad rush to the Start Triangle.

WINTER EVENTS - COURSE SETTERS NEEDED

We have a very busy winter ahead, with 9 Wednesday, 6 Saturday, and 3 Sunday events to run. More details some of these are inside. We have course setting vacancies for some Wednesday events. We'd love to see some first time course setters have a go, and as Peter Hobbs mentions in his Prez Piece, there are plenty of club members willing and able to help you get started. Please see Debbie, or send me an email (address in masthead above), if you would like to set a course.

PREZ SEZ - Peter Hobbs

Missing Person Alert: Missing Person Alert: Ian James: last seen Wednesday 2nd January 2008 at 7:40pm, approximately 3km east of Domeney Reserve, Park Orchards, heading eastward.

We all have 'off' nights from time to time, but Ian James's effort at Park Orchards surely takes the cake (see Ian's account later in this edition). The gist of the story is that Ian, competing in the power walking course, was proceeding smoothly until encountering a tricky five-way intersection near control 18. A wrong turn at this

intersection caused Ian to finish up at control 1, instead of control 13. Both controls were located approximately 600m from control 18, both were accessed via a hilly and generally straight road, and both controls were located at ninety-degree left hand turns. The fatal mistake, it appears, is that Ian did not notice he was at control 1 instead of control 13! Ian proceeded to take the left hand ninety-degree turn, thinking he was heading westward towards control 19 and the finish. He was, however, heading eastward, towards Croydon Hills. To make matters worse this portion of the course involved a very long loop (approximately 4km) with no short cuts. Witnesses report seeing Ian heading eastward through the five-way intersection at 7:40pm. Seven kilometres later and in total darkness, Ian crossed the finish line at 8:37pm, earning a 99-point late penalty.

I had my own disaster at the Valley Reserve event on February 6. You may remember this was a humid night featuring a well set (a.k.a. difficult) course by Peter Dalwood. A series of half a dozen or so 'brain melts', as I call them, resulted in me omitting crucial controls including two within a virtual stone's throw of the start/finish; visiting several controls that should have been 'definite drops'; wasting time at every control pondering where to head next; and running 12km when only 10km was required! This was certainly my worst run for the past few years, although not as bad as the Jells Park disaster of 13 December 1995. That's another story...

It's all part of the fun. We all have poor events from time to time and I must acknowledge how well Ian handled the whole saga and laughed along with the many jokes aimed at him that night. That's the joy of orienteering; you can have a bad event but laugh about it with the knowledge that it's not life and death and that there's always the prospect of a better run next week.

On a different note, at the last DROC Committee Meeting the topic of newer members and first timers being encouraged to set courses was discussed. I recall the first course I set at Mitcham many years ago. I was fortunate to benefit from course setting advice and 'on the day' assistance from Phil Torode and other experienced DROC members. This made the experience enjoyable, educative and stress free. The concept of setting a course and being responsible for the associated mapping, deploying / picking up controls, making announcements on the night etc., can seem rather daunting at first. However, this need not be the case. We encourage newer members and first time course setters to give course setting a go. DROC Committee members and other experienced club members are always willing and available to assist, mentor and guide new course setters (and old ones) through the experience of setting a course. I personally make myself available.

Happy running (and walking).

WHO DID THE MOST EVENTS LAST YEAR?

According to the VOA's participation database, quite a few DROC members were amongst the top "O-tragics" (ie attended more than 50 events). In order: Ian and Debbie Dodd (123 events each); Louise Hall (112); Newbury Navigators (111); Peter Yeates (110); Ray Howe (110); Dale Howe (106); Mark Besley (104); Ilze Yeates (96); Tina Smith (95); Wally Cavill (93); Reg Saunders (85); Pam King (83); Peter Grover (80); Ian Davies (79); Allan and Pat Miller (78 each); Ian Greenwood (78); Ian James (77); Marta Salek (76); Denise Pike (75); Judy Hopkins (74); Stan Gurman (74); Sue Gurman (73); Peter Dalwood (62); Graham Wallis (59); Phil Torode (58); Robyn Hall (53).

WHO'S DOING WHAT - MEMBER NEWS

Membership fees for 2008 were due on January 1. If you haven't paid yet, there'll be a friendly reminder enclosed. Please complete your membership form and forward it together with your fee, to Debbie Dodd.

NEW MEMBERS - please welcome Vaughan and Jayne Edmondson, Andrew Hester, Marea Hinkley, Matt Nuttall, Greg Robinson and Linda Webb, who have all joined since January this year.

It was with great pleasure that the DROC Committee announced a new Life Member in Ian Greenwood. Ian was DROC president for a record number of years during a difficult period in the club's history. Under his leadership, DROC focused on its strength of park and streetO, developed a lot of new maps, grew its membership and consolidated its strong financial position. Ian continues his involvement by setting courses (for which we generally forgive him) and coming up with great ideas like the Cake-O Teams Event.

CONGRATULATIONS to new parents Jared and Leonie Ortlipp, who have a daughter, Alicia. She's already been to her first orienteering event.

Robert and Judy Fennessy also have a brand new daughter called Brooke. Judy sent us this email just before Christmas: "Brooke was born 5th Nov 11.57 pm, weighing in at a sizeable 10lb 3 1/2 (4.64kg) via Caesarian after several days of labour for mum! She is now 6.5 weeks old, and weighs 5.6kg, similar to an average 3 month old baby! She has begun to make some "cooing" sounds- lovely, and loves to have a bath given by daddy each night, she also likes her pram! Good news for future street orienteering!"

ORIENTEERING BADGE AWARDS - this year's Badges went to:

Silver: Debbie Dodd, Ian Dodd, Pam King, Allan Miller

Bronze: Louise Hall, Pat Miller, Tina Smith, Ilze Yeates, Peter Yeates

Badges are awarded by Orienteering Australia. Certain events are nominated as Badge events during the year, and each competitor's time is compared to the fastest time on the day. Competitors must have three "Badge" times to earn a badge. Designated Badge events are usually national and state championships, plus one or two other high level events on top quality maps.

TRAILWALKER TEAMS - we have competitors in two Teams in this year's Oxfam Trailwalker, which starts on Friday April 11. They are all training hard already. If you can help with support on the day, please contact Peter Dalwood. For details of the event, go to www2.oxfam.org.au/trailwalker/Melbourne/

DROC Delirium, team 689 - Dale Howe, Ian Davies, Peter Grover, Ray Howe

Purple Toed Sloths, team 530 - Karen Pate and Greg Robinson

DROC SHOP

Our club clothing range now includes headbands - white or blue, with lyrebird logo, for \$7 each, or buy 2 and get a free wristband. New short sleeved running tops will be available just after Easter in a full range of sizes - same design as the original Giramondo tops (white with red/blue artwork), and very reasonably priced at \$45.

Other items in stock: running singlets \$40; heavy duty fleece jackets \$55 (remember those cold winter nights?); 1 small bike top \$55, and 1 large blue polo top \$27.

If you would like to be fitted out in club colours, see Peter Yeates.

WHAT'S ON THIS WINTER

Our Sunday events this year include:

The Mother's Day DuO (Run-Ride-Run) - Adventure Series race, May 11, at Mt Robertson (near Kinglake). Graham Wallis is preparing the courses which will include running and biking legs. The DuO series has been well promoted amongst mountain bikers and adventure racers, so we expect a good turnout of both experienced and novice orienteers. We'll need assistance with setting up, registration, and finish. If you are available, please contact Graham or Debbie.

Koomba Park/Abbey Walk - August 31. Our updated Abbey Walk map (with Eastlink included), will be combined with the Koomba Park sprint map, to produce a multi-map, multi-loop event that should be great fun for all. There will be a range of courses and options to suit everyone.

Scotchgard Urban Enduro - Adventure Series race, October 26 - a long distance event, mostly in parkland and surrounding streets, promises to be a quite a challenge. Start training now! This event is also a fundraiser for the Victorian Secondary Schools Team, and we particularly encourage all junior orienteers to come along.

CakeO Teams Event - the final Saturday Series event will be held in the Hundred Acres, Park Orchards, on a special large scale map. The format is being devised by Ian Greenwood - you have been warned! Whatever Ian comes up with, you can rest assured it will be devious - and a lot of fun.

RESULTS

Summer Series 1 - Mondays

A1 - Ian Davies - 3 rd	A2 - Dave Gorman 1 st , Ray Howe 3 rd
A3 - Rachel Thomas 2 nd , David Blom 3 rd	B2 - Dale Howe 3 rd
B1 - Marta Salek 3 rd	C2 - Ben Beveridge 1 st , Sam Kerley 2 nd
C1 - Reg Saunders 3 rd	PW3 - Pam King 1 st
PW1 - Phil Torode 1 st	PW2 - Sue Gurman 3 rd

Wednesdays

A1 - Ian Davies 3 rd	A2 - Ray Howe 3 rd	A3 - Louise Hall 1 st , Mark Besley 3 rd
B1 - Peter Hobbs 1 st , Andrew Hester 2 nd	B3 - Peter Dalwood 2 nd	
B4 - Robyn Hall 1 st		
C1 - Reg Saunders 2 nd , Peter Kovassy 3 rd	C2 - Chris Wallis 1 st , Denise Pike 2 nd	
C3 - Ben Beveridge 2 nd , Sam Kerley 3 rd	C4 - Debbie Dodd 1 st	
PW2 - Judy Hopkins 3 rd	PW3 - Stan Gurman 1 st	
PW4 - Sue Gurman 1 st	PW5 - Wally Cavill 2 nd	

Thursdays

B - Ian Greenwood 3 rd	C - Peter Kovassy 1 st	D - Allan Miller 1 st
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CLUB CONTACTS

For information about, or assistance with EVENTS (first event vouchers, transport, equipment loan, newcomer information kits, informal coaching etc) contact:

Ian Dodd	tel: 9878 9168	email: debiandodd@inet.net.au , or
Peter Yeates	tel: 9725 4612	email: yeatespi@aol.com

For CLUB CLOTHING (running and bike tops, and fleece jackets and vests) contact:

Peter Yeates	tel: 9725 4612	email: yeatespi@aol.com
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For MAPS AND COURSE SETTING enquiries, contact:

Pam King	tel: 5968 3076	email: pamela.king@haileybury.vic.edu.au
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For MEMBERSHIP and NEWSLETTER enquiries, contact:

Debbie Dodd	tel: 9878 9168	email: debiandodd@inet.net.au
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LOST? NEVER! (TEMPORARILY MISLAID? PERHAPS, JUST A TAD ...) - by Ian James

A thing's not considered lost until you find it. Until then it's either inconveniently located, inappropriately positioned or impracticably accessible.

Event: 2 January, 2008.

Always a welcome sign, the Orienteering pennant arrow pointed to the right, directing parking, and indicating the start location. Not so. After proceeding to the far east end of the car park and looking around, I noticed the gathering crowd at the far west end of the same car park, probably 200 metres distant. Although I had arrived early (for me), I opted to leave the car and use the time for some (unintended) warm-up exercises. In retrospect, I should have added some basic navigational exercises. My evening, or the bit that followed, would soon be controlled by forces associated with the circle, which, as any pilot (should) remember, includes a reciprocal bearing of 180 degrees.

I rose from the punch at Control 16. The last of the sun's rays, paint-brush of the night, were caressing the upper foliage on the valley rim, edging the darkening bush with a thin line of gold fire. I was jolted from this brief reverie by the realisation that I was far from home. Indeed I was far from anywhere.

I'd put in a lot of hard (but not very skillful or timely) work, to get to this point. The start had been a 'follow-the-leader' affair and the competitive genes had kicked in. Sadly, the directional gyro had escaped its gimbals and was lying amid the wreckage of the hitherto reliable sixth sense assembly.

The map had been an absolute boon, bristling with black lines, some of which even approximated roads and streets (actually, that's not very kind, but written with an abundance of literary licence).

Streets around Control 18 near Warrandyte Road had manifested in places not related to the aforesaid black lines on the map. From this point the wheels of navigation fell off in large numbers, despite help from Judy Hopkins and others who were passing - significantly, in the opposite direction.

Crossing Warrandyte Road, I determined to make up for time lost in confusion. The time loss was simply reinforced as I slowed to the speed of an arthritic slug, ably assisted by cascading contours. I headed for Control 13.

Anything resembling competition was as scarce as products of the fabled rocking horse. The full meaning of this wasn't revealed to me until the top of the hill, where the expected Control 13 was replaced by a totally unexpected and equally

Location: Park Orchards, very approximately!

unwelcome punch with the number 1 clearly emblazoned on its plate.

This was not entirely satisfactory from a navigational point of view. Indeed, I had some difficulty finding a number 1 on the map at all, a map I was now viewing with declining confidence. Number 1 represented an 'about face' of sorts, not to mention a 'loss of face' of some significance. The appearance of unexplained side-streets, bends and purposeful runners heading in the opposite direction now made more sense.

I resolved, in the face of an extra 2 kms added to my intended course, to continue in the same aberrant direction. Not even frantic and extremely cryptic arm waving by President Peter Hobbs could deter me from this, in retrospect, fraught decision.

My fate was sealed, however, when I sacrificed Controls 9 and 2, heading for where I believed Control 16 awaited consummation with my card. I spent at least 20 minutes, contemplating each blackberry bramble, thistle thicket, fence rail and log that appeared to be conspiring against me. I forged my way up a steep gully in search of the well-defined path shown on the map.

A slavering hound, unused to bearded apparitions erupting from the boundary thickets, attacked. I felt that this 'wasn't in the brochure' and retreated back through the fence I'd mistakenly penetrated. I sought solace and advice from a puzzled resident who was concerned at my unexplained appearance in her vegetable garden. For advice, she covered some of the finer points of property rights and boundaries. I contemplated a return to the dog. It had smaller teeth.

I reached Control 16, not before offering an apology to the dentally over-endowed and threatening gardener. I briefly marvelled at the sunset. Gradually, I became aware of my reduced chances of an 8:05pm finish. More importantly, were the chances of unbridled ridicule that would surely accompany what was looking like a very late finish.

The only economical route home was via most of the remaining 4- & 5-point controls. Perhaps all was not lost. *Some points* were after all, preferable to a negative score. Sadly, even this was a folly-riddled strategy, serving only to emphasise the night's navigational inadequacies.

I limped on. It was comforting to find that all of the controls were at least still in place - the elusive

13, followed by 19 and 11 and then off to find the last, number 14, and face the music.

I burst from the bush at 14 only to see Mark Besley collecting controls. It really WAS that late! Mark made as if to collect my prized Number 14. I saw red, although it may have been blood from my bramble encounters. I hadn't endured all this to be denied the last punch opportunity. I'm not sure if it was the bleeding blackberry scratches, my deranged babbling or my demonic gaze, but Mark retreated, saying something about getting one of the other punches first.

The reception was as expected. Well-meaning derision is after all, one of the few consistencies in orienteering and I think my 33-minute late penalty and accompanying comments were well earned. It still continues, weeks later. Minutes from the start of an event, compassionate runners are advising that I should already consider commencing my return to the finish line.

Could this herald the sunset of my career in orienteering?

TWIN PETES BIKE RIDE

The Twin Petes - Yeates and Dalwood - doing it tough. Can we hold all our Committee meetings like this??

The Twin Petes bike ride is becoming so popular, we'll be balloting places next year! Blessed with a perfect day, a group of about 20 - 25 riders set off at a leisurely pace through Nortons Park, along the Dandenong Trail through Vermont and Heathmont, and on to Croydon. Morning tea was very welcome after the rigours of the hill between the creek and the Yeates abode! We were joined there by the walking contingent. Thanks Ilze for all those yummy fresh baked goodies. Spurred on by the wonderful downhill back to the creek, we then meandered via the Knox trails back to Nortons Park, and the end of the ride. The rest of the afternoon was spent paddling in the heated pool, eating delicious bbq and salad, enjoying Andrew's birthday cake, and generally having a very relaxed time. Twin Petes will be back next summer - sign on now!

WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT BARCODES - by Ian Davies (pictured below running at Darebin)

Soon after I started StreetO I met Geoff Hudson and learned of his successful foray into the world of RFID (Radio Frequency ID, the blue wrist bands). I could see however that a system that worked alongside our existing Cards and Stubs system would have advantages when we get a significant number of participants who don't attend regularly.

By adding a barcode to both the score Card and Stub, a fairly simple reader and PC system provides a number of advantages with a minimal increase in the work required by the event organizer. Importantly, if any part of this system busts, we just keep going using the existing manual system.

The barcode reading system does the following:

The system gives a double check of the number of competitors when the stubs are counted into the system. It will help to prevent 'losing count' when receiving the returned cards, as the number of returned (competitors) cards is displayed. Lastly (and most importantly) it allows the stub for a missing card to be rapidly located, so a name can be put to the missing face.

To use the system:

After everyone has started the organizer scans all of the stubs to tell the computer how many people have started, and the serial number of each of the cards that are in use. When this is complete, the software is changed from "Stubs" to "Returns" mode. When people arrive back their card is scanned and the computer registers that card number as 'returned' and displays a total number of returned participants. When less than 6 participants remain out, the computer shows a list of the card numbers still out, and if required the corresponding stubs can be located by manually flipping through the stack of stubs.

Changes made to the internal electronics have made the system more reliable and since the beginning of February the system has operated successfully at each event. Occasionally the course setter will omit to change between 'Stubs' and 'Returns' modes, (yes I've done it too) and we get the system going again by re-scanning the arrived cards. Scanning the cards requires a degree of patience and a small amount of practice. The two secrets to successful scanning are - place the barcode close to the base plate in the centre of one of the "guide lines", and if it won't scan rotate the card rather than just jiggling it back and forth.

As more people use the system we will develop a pool of experienced 'operators' who will be able to assist those who feel a little uncertain. If you are to run an event in the near future, come and join in when I'm doing the briefing before we start, or watch the system in use, so you can see how it works before you need to use it yourself.

What's next:

As the scanner uses a bit too much power for the PC to supply from its internal battery it needs an external power supply. My first priority is to have the whole system run off 12 volts, eliminating the need for the 240 volt inverter.

Next is to make the scanner fully self contained so it will run without an attached PC, showing the necessary information on a small LCD display (easily visible in daylight).

There will also be some changes to the barcode (shorter and higher) & we will add one or two more squares to the 'first name' boxes on the cards with our next print run in May.

If you see the equipment at an event, please take care of it. Whoever broke the scanner by leaning on it should know that we were lucky that it only took half an hour to fix. Dropping the PC off the table however, could result in a repair taking several weeks.

If you think you can equal or better my cabinet making or software coding skills, speak up, I don't hold "intellectual property" on any of this and having help means that I can pursue some of my more mundane responsibilities, like clearing tree roots out of drains...