

PUNCHLINE

Dandenong Ranges Orienteering Club Inc

www.drocorienteering.com.au

Incorporated Association Registered Number A0003225B

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Issue 195

January 2021

Well a lot has happened since the October issue - we finally emerged, bleary-eyed and befuddled, out of lockdown. We successfully started up a Summer Series that has looked and felt rather different. We held Sunday training sessions in November, which were very popular, and gave some new course setters an opportunity to try their hand at planning bush courses. The Victorian Sprint Championships went ahead at Kensington in mid December, and it was wonderful to be at something that had a sense of occasion!

Many of us headed out of Melbourne as soon as the “ring of steel” came down, with Bright, Gippsland Lakes, Canberra and southern NSW particularly popular. As we’ve learned in the last couple of weeks, freedom of movement is still very transient, and things can change with just a few hours’ notice (we are up to version 5.0 of our planned NSW trip, booked in June 2020).

StreetO has been up and running for over 2 months, and in that time we have seen group sizes change from 10, to 50, to 100. We’ve had to adapt several times to meet demand while complying with the rapidly changing rules. QR codes, Square payments, Multi Passes and MapRun have become the norm. What hasn’t changed is the fun of picking up a map and instantly throwing yourself into the challenge of choosing the best route, then seeing if you did better or worse than your fellow competitors!

Our AGM was rather different too - held on Zoom, it attracted a record number of attendees! We’re delighted to welcome three new Committee members - Wayne Love, Damian Spencer, and Helen Walpole, who will all bring positive energy and practicality.

We’ve also recently welcomed new members Rhys Eddy, Jacqui White and Brett Wood. Rhys and Jacqui have already been to plenty of Summer Series events, and jumped into the deep end by competing at the Kensington Sprint Champs - well done! We haven’t met Brett yet but look forward to seeing him during 2021.

One thing that hasn’t changed is the enthusiasm and support from all of our club members. Over two thirds of the club had renewed their membership for 2021, well before the due date. Our members are incredibly loyal, and many of you should enjoy a bit of nostalgia, provided by Sarah Love as she sorted through 40 years of club history, unearthing some gems along the way.

Finally, we have lots of fantastic events planned for 2021 - hopefully most of them, if not all, can actually go ahead!

2021 - DIARY DATES (FINGERS CROSSED!)

Wednesday February 24 - Park Street Championships Final, Cavills Corner

One of our all time favourite maps will be used to determine the 2021 Park Street Champions

Sunday March 31 - MelbushO, Police Paddocks

Courses previously planned for 2020 will be used to introduce this new map to MelbushO.

Saturday April 17/Sunday April 18 - Melbourne City Race Weekend

A Park Prologue on Saturday in Melbourne's inner east precedes the 2nd Melbourne City Race at Port Melbourne on Sunday morning. Yes the date has changed again - this time to avoid clashing with the Formula One Grand Prix! Online entries open in March. www.melbournecityrace.com.au

Sunday June 13 - Vic Autumn Series, Eppalock (part of Queens Birthday 3-Day weekend)

DROC will combine forces with Bendigo and Melbourne Forest Racers to present a three day feast of bush orienteering, in everyone's favourite forest.

Sunday July 4 - MelbushO, Wellington Chase

A return to granite in this beautiful outer eastern bushland reserve.

Sunday November 7 - Vic MTBO Series, Mt Robertson

Get your wheels ready for some mountain bike action as we return to the hills and pine forest of Mt Robertson.

Sunday November 21 - RMIT Sprint Double

Two events in one! This campus is large and varied enough to hold two different sprint races in one action-packed day.

MULTIPASS - THE NEW WAY TO PAY FOR PARK STREET EVENTS

This Summer series saw the introduction of the new MultiPass10 - upfront payment for entry to 10 Park Street events for a single payment of \$50. Not only does this provide a contactless means of paying, as you can use your credit card or secure online link to pay or renew - but it gives you the flexibility to attend events in any series, including Geelong, Surf Coast, Macedon Ranges and Mornington Peninsula. MultiPasses will roll over into Winter series if unused by the end of March.

You simply purchase your MultiPass, come along to whichever events you like, record "MultiPass" as your payment type when checking in, and renew the Pass online when we send you a reminder and link to our secure Square payment site. It's that simple! Email voa@iinet.net.au to request a payment link, and place your order. If you've been paying by cash, we urge you to switch to MultiPass asap.



DROC SHOP

The DROC Shop is still open for business remotely, and ready to get you kitted out for 2021 and beyond! We sell Sportident sticks (including SI Air sticks for those who want to speed up their race), Pro-Tech gaiters, fingerbands, and Silva headbands. [Prices can be found here](#). Order by sending an email to droc@iinet.net.au. We also have a range of running tops and jackets, in various designs and sizes. Contact [Peter Yeates](#) to find out what's in stock.

MEMBERSHIPS

A reminder that 2021 memberships are due as of January 1st. Use the link sent from Eventor to renew online, or pay by bank transfer. Membership fees remain at \$30 for adults, and free for juniors under 21.

ACHIEVEMENTS

VICTORIAN SPRINT CHAMPS

It was like a reunion in the car park of the only Championship event to be held in Victoria in 2020, as we caught up with friends who we hadn't seen since the Melbourne Sprint Weekend way back in March. Thanks to Melbourne Forest Racers for their determination to make the event happen - a great way to wind up the year. We tried desperately to remember which finger our SIAC sticks went on, how to use our compasses, and what all those symbols on the map meant. But once on the course it all came back, and we had tons of fun navigating the complex streets, lanes, and stockyards of historic Kensington - one of Melbourne's best inner urban maps.



The courses offered challenges with a more European town flavour than the traditional large campus maps. It was fitting that the course planner, Mikkel Kaae-Nilsen, is Danish, and did all the planning from the other side of the world!

Being the first such event for many months, it was clear that navigational skills were a little ... ahem ... rusty; and people fell readily into traps. It didn't matter - it was a glorious day, the atmosphere was festive, and fun was had. What more could you want in a year like 2020?

Congratulations go to winners Helen Walpole and Peter Grover; runners-up Sally Barlow, Amber Louw, Simon Rouse and Ilze Yeates; and third placegetters Peter Dalwood, Ian Davies, Asha Steer and Janine Steer. Each will receive free or discounted entry to the MFR Summer Sprints in early 2021.

PARK STREET MEFTY AWARD



Despite being forced to cancel our entire Winter season due to Covid, the MEFTY (Most Events for the Year) points were tallied up, and the winner was Stuart McWilliam, with a significant total of 98 events between October 2019 and March 2020, representing almost 100% of available events. Stuart's name will appear on the trophy for a third time, making him only the second person to achieve that feat. Stuart is already eyeing the prize for 2021, and has driven as far afield as Rosebud (approx. 120 km) to compete in the new Mornington Peninsula series!



MILLENNIUM CLUB 750 BADGE

Millennium Club points are once again being tallied up, and Ros King completed the milestone of 750 events in December. Ros received a Companion Badge. You can see the current Millennium Club rankings [here](#) - these are updated at the end of each month by Ray Howe.

SUMMER SERIES

In late October, the Victorian government finally released us and set us on the Roadmap to Recovery. Curfews, Travel Bubbles and Rings of Steel were replaced by Doughnut Days, as positive cases gradually came to a long-awaited end. A lot of planning for orienteering's return finally came to fruition; we held a "practice session" in the last week of October at Wheelers Hill, where we tested out our new QR code check-in system, and sold lots of Season Passes, in readiness for the official return of Summer Series on November 2. The season start was delayed by only 4 weeks, and has so far not been interrupted.

For the first few weeks, only groups of 10 were allowed to gather at once, although multiple groups were permitted. Online pre-entry was quickly established to ensure we complied. We had six timeslots, between 5pm and 7pm, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Demand quickly outstripped supply, and we ran overflow sessions on Thursdays, which were a re-run of the previous night's event. We spent long hours teaching everyone how to check in, how to use MapRun on their phone or Garmin, and how to buy one of the new MultiPasses that were on offer. For a while, the actual maps and courses seemed rather secondary to the new admin processes.

By week 3, everything was running very smoothly, processes were all working as they should, and we began to relax. Numbers gradually increased as more people made their way back. Many people commented on how safe and reassured they felt, seeing the measures we'd put into place. Others thanked us for "training" them so that they could go to their favourite café and check in like experts!

As gathering sizes increased, we were able to compress the start windows, and we now have a 30-minute timeframe for everyone to check in and start. It's wonderful to go out now at 7pm, and still see other people on the course - for a while it felt lonely out there at that time, as most people had already come and gone. Now there's lots more chat both before and after the events, and that's as it should be.

As we move into January, we hope we've settled on a model that we can stick with for most of summer - but of course who knows? We'll continue to adapt and evolve as we need to.

Some of the things we've introduced have brought benefits beyond staying Covid safe. Using our QR code system has allowed us to roll out MultiPasses, as we can easily track attendance at any given event without waiting for the results. We can also check that all starters have finished the event, much faster and more easily than counting cards and stubs. MapRunF/G have removed the need to put out and retrieve control plates, and with increased GPS accuracy, the successful introduction of wearable technology, and more people available to provide the back-end and customer support that we need, MapRun is serving our needs pretty well. These are sure to remain in place for "the foreseeable future".

Some quick stats:

- Attendances compared to last summer have held up remarkably well considering the circumstances, with just a 10% drop "across the board". Between 250 and 300 people have been attending each week.
- Over 100 MultiPasses have been sold - many people are already on their second set of 10 events. This is in addition to over 80 Season Passes sold.
- Over 40 DROC members have been coming to Summer Series - close to half the membership.

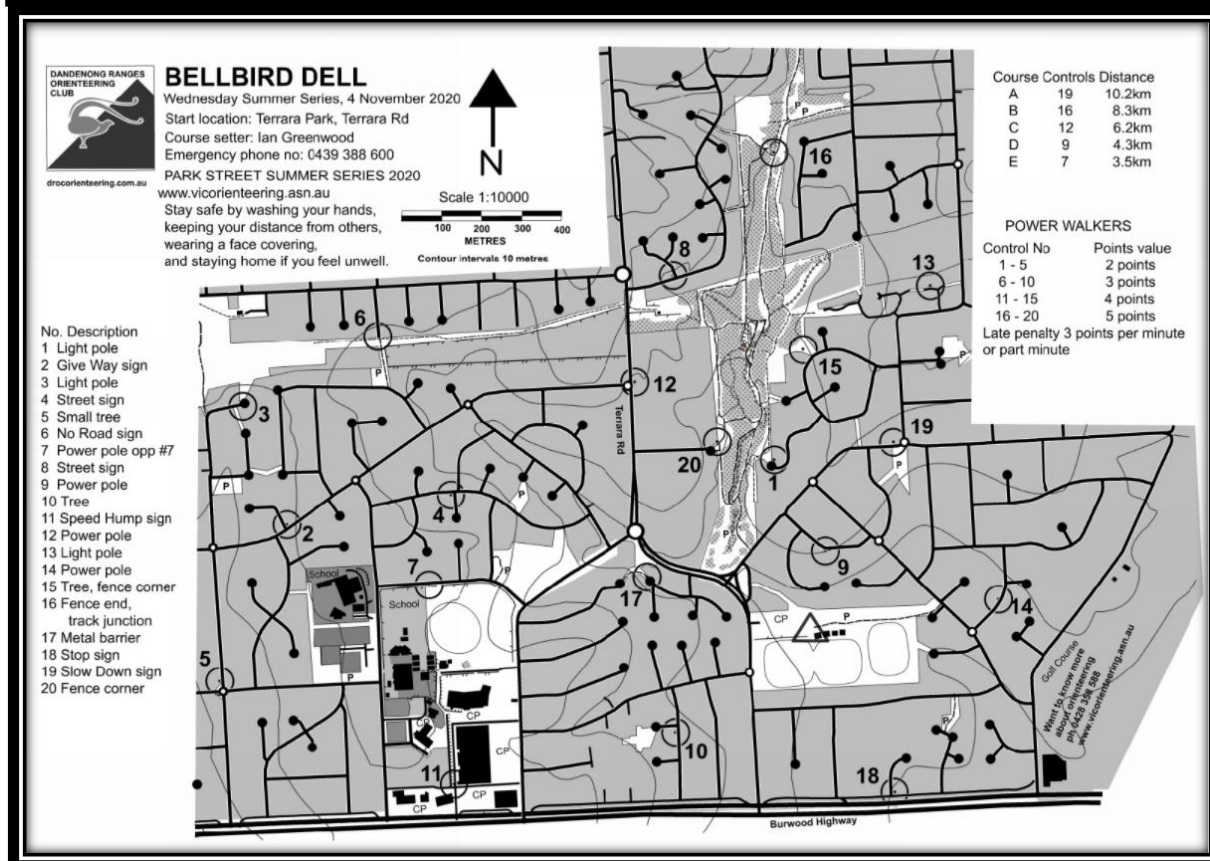
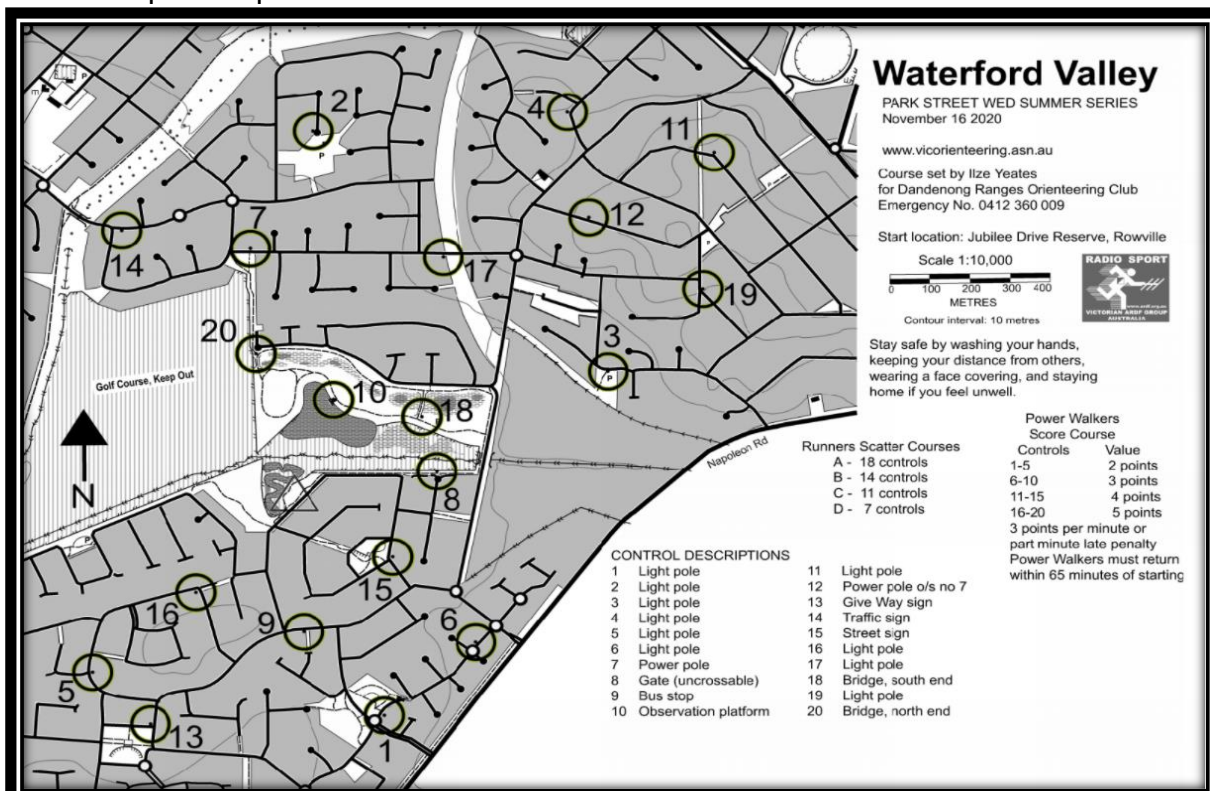
We have several club members to thank - Mark Besley has been doing an amazing job working through the quirks and foibles of the series scoring system, figuring the best way to integrate numerous data sources as efficiently as possible. Ian Dodd and Peter Yeates have been helping participants on the ground, patiently working with them to troubleshoot tech problems. Ian has also been hard at work making sure we have a robust financial reporting system, and automating calculations so that we can quickly reconcile the bank account and distribute funds to clubs. Pam King and Peter Dalwood have provided the base maps for our course setters, making sure everything is properly set up for MapRun. Our course setters have done a fantastic job of having their maps well prepared, and being there at events to assist. And of course many members have been coming along and supporting our efforts. Thank you all!

TOP MAPS

Here's my Editor's Pick of courses set in the first weeks of Summer Series by DROC members.

Ilze Yeates used a combined map of Waterford Valley and Glenfern Run, and a new start location, to provide a real puzzler that required smart planning. Ian Greenwood produced a typically fiendish course at Bellbird Dell. No matter how hard you looked at it, there were just no good options!

You can find all the event maps from Summer Series [here](#) - these are freely available for anytime use, and are all set up for MapRun.

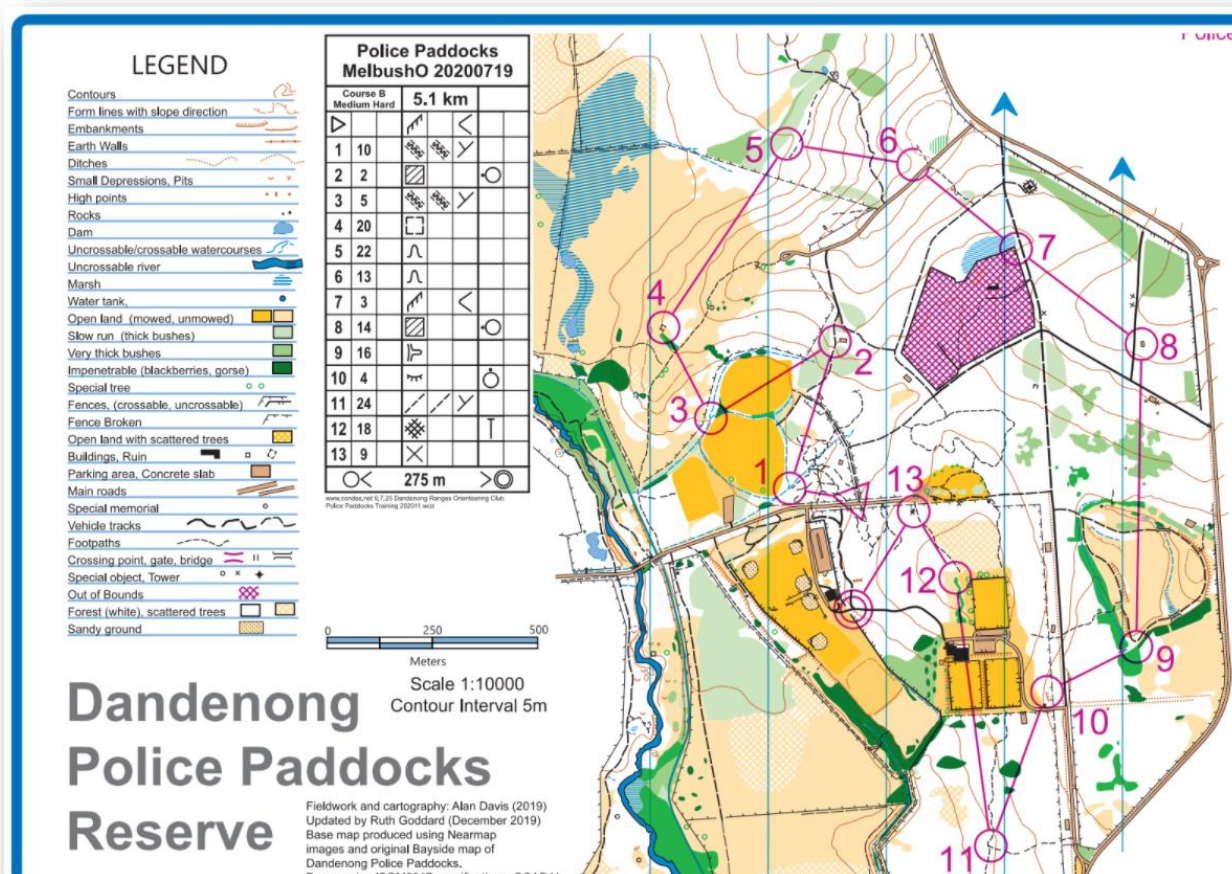


POLICE PADDOCKS BUSH TRAINING

Although sport was allowed to resume in November, we were unable to obtain permits to hold events in Parks Victoria venues. So we decided to hold some informal Sunday Training sessions, using tapes or permanent markers as control locations, setting 2 or 3 courses of varying length and difficulty, providing a colour map, and keeping a record of participants, but no results. Many people took the opportunity to go somewhere new as we were all venturing outside our restricted travel bubbles; some brushed up on particular skills, while others just enjoyed catching up with friends and a change of scenery.

Police Paddocks was somewhere that Ainslie Cummins and Peter Chen could get to by bike. Having set many great MapLink courses during lockdown, Ainslie was looking to plan a different type of course, and when she offered to have a go at Police Paddocks, it made sense to use the courses for one of the training days. Ainslie and Peter went on several rides, and checked the control locations extensively. Between us we prepared the maps and created the courses - a 7 km Long course, a 5 km Medium course, and a 3.5 km Short course. Navigation was generally moderate difficulty.

We split the day into two sessions, to keep numbers under limits, and spread out start times across a couple of hours. It was a simple process of checking in, receiving a map, completing a course, and checking out. About 50 people took part.



The courses were long, and proved tougher than they looked on paper, thanks mainly to the proliferation of vegetation that sprang up almost overnight in some areas mapped as yellow, and the necessity to avoid the green. Gaiters were a necessary accessory as we waded through long grasses and other scratchy things.

I have never been on this map, and was surprised at the variety of terrain - a bit of everything from intricate small watercourses to classic lightly timbered spur gully, open hillsides with expansive views, long track legs, and sports fields. You had to constantly switch tactics and mindset. It should be a great

venue for our MelbushO event in March - and the seasonal vegetation should have died off somewhat by then!

Thanks to Ainslie and Peter for their thorough preparation, and time spent both beforehand and on the day, scouting locations, placing tapes, and handling registration while I was out on the 5 km course for a bit longer than planned!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020

It is with pleasure that I table the President's Report for the 42nd year of operation of the Dandenong Ranges Orienteering Club (DROC).

Due to the Covid-19 virus pandemic, this year (28 October 2019 to 22 October 2020) has been like no other. Instead of the club organizing its usual quota of 35-40 events, we have organised less than half of this; the last one being the Silvan Mountain Bike O on March 22. Other than a handful of informal or highly restricted events, this makes a total of seven months with no proper orienteering events.

For the record, it is worth recapping a few Covid-19 details.

In response to the pandemic, Victoria has been in a State of Emergency since March and the government has imposed a series of new laws which heavily restrict, and for a time prohibited, public or private gatherings of any sort, which of course includes orienteering. Masks outdoors are mandatory and there are only four reasons to leave your house if you really need to: shopping, medical, care giving or exercise. You must stay within 5km of your residence unless you have a valid reason to exceed this. These laws are only just being wound back now as case numbers are falling. This has meant that virtually all orienteering events in Melbourne (and many in rural Victoria) have been cancelled and the substantive part of the orienteering year entirely wiped out. This has extended to full cancellation of major carnivals such as Easter in New South Wales and Aus Champs in Tasmania. Also cancelled were major Victorian events such as Queens Birthday weekend and the Middle and Long Distance Championships, which for a brief time, were earmarked as back-up Australian Championship events. All other States and Territories have had fewer Covid-19 cases and outbreaks than Victoria, resulting in Victoria experiencing one of the longest lockdowns, including some of the strictest laws, in the world. We can only hope that case numbers stay low and that the state can open up again in the near future, allowing public gatherings and sports to start up again. We all eagerly await a return to somewhat normal orienteering conditions!

In another first, as if the pandemic was not an odd enough occurrence, a small number of events in January - including Joel Crothers' Street O event at Dingley Village - were cancelled due to poor air quality from Victorian and New South Wales bushfires.

Of the few events that we were actually able to conduct, the highlights were:

- The Sprint Into Spring event at Oxley College
- Coordination of a one-off January edition of the Monash Indoor-Outdoor sprint
- Course setting and coordination of the NOL Sprint Relay at Latrobe Uni
- Mountain Bike O event at Silvan
- A heavily regulated training event at Cardinia Reservoir

Other notable occurrences and member achievements include:

- The purchase of "The Square" (an electronic payment device)
- Sarah Love taking on the task of digitising many old DROC records and documents
- Committee meetings being conducted electronically via ZOOM
- Peter Yeates and Ian Davies constructing a set of new control stands
- Peter Dalwood, Ian Davies and Peter Grover (and their respective helpers) producing numerous new maps and refining existing maps
- Debbie Dodd taking on a lead role setting up procedures and rules to allow orienteering to occur safely in a Covid climate and also being influential in getting the orienteering DIY library up and running

Although there have been far fewer events this year, I would like to acknowledge the outstanding performances of club members who have competed in various local, state and national level events during 2019-20. Unheard of in past years but now commonplace, DROC has eight members who competed at State or National level (including junior incumbents from 2019, who didn't have the opportunity for re-selection in 2020 due to Covid), including Amber Louw, James Love and Sally Barlow who represent the Victorian Schools Team. Joel Crothers and Sammy Love finished first and second respectively in their divisions of the Primary School Championships. The club applauds these achievements and will continue to support the club's juniors.



Current President and Future President? Pete giving Mabel some training in recognizing forest features.

Membership has been generally stable this year with 95, down from 98 last year, which is an achievement given the lack of orienteering and virtually no opportunity to attract new members. Bucking the trend was a German university student who took out a pro-rata membership for part of the year and attended a small number of events as a DROC member. DROC's website continues to present the club positively and the on-line version of Punchline continues to be well received and reduces administration effort.

Financially, the club has continued to preserve a strong asset position and will make a small profit this year. The traditional Christmas dinner was again a popular festivity with approximately 50 people in attendance after a warm summer series event at Blackburn Lake. During the evening a record 25 Orienteering Australia Merit badges were awarded. Other highlights of the evening were a large orange and white chocolate ripple cake and an even larger birthday cake courtesy of the Love family.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members who have volunteered in one or more capacities this year. I can't possibly list the efforts of all volunteers however the following list gives an indication of efforts that members have put into the club and the sport in general:

- Debbie Dodd - Punchline and e-news editor, website curator, membership secretary and general organiser of many things. Debbie plays a huge role in the day to day operation of the club particularly through her efficient coordination of the events DROC organises. Co-chair of Urban Orienteering Committee, Wednesday street-o Coordinator, main OV liaison and takes a leading role in managing the OV website. As previously mentioned, Debbie has taken on a leading role in coordinating OVs response to Covid-19 including devising return to sport plans and DIY orienteering.

- Ian Dodd - Treasurer, equipment management, SportIdent and SI-stick expert and always a helping hand. Ian regularly provides technical support for timing and SI systems at events including non-DROC events such as the Melbourne Sprint NOL events. On behalf of the Committee I would like to acknowledge the outstanding contribution Debbie and Ian make to DROC and orienteering generally.
- Mark Besley and Ian Davies - scoring and control cards.
- Peter Yeates - Saturday street-o coordinator, coordinating uniform sales, duties as Vice President, equipment management and always coming up with ideas.
- Peter Hobbs - Co-coach of the Victorian Junior Squad.
- Vic Sedunary - management of the park and street-o accounting.
- Pam King and Sarah Love - mapping and secretary duties.
- Committee members - assisting run the club.
- Members - making the club.

Special thanks must also go to Peter Grover for many years of service on the Committee as Secretary, and to Sarah Love for taking on the role. The efforts of Ray Howe over many years as Park and Street statistician, including record keeper for the MEFTY award and Millennium Club, are also acknowledged.

A strong core of dedicated members have continued devoting their efforts to the operation of the club, steering it in a 'northerly' direction. I encourage all members to become involved in the club and its activities. There are some new faces on the committee this year which is great; and we would always welcome more including Junior members who may nominate as Ordinary Committee Members. Things such as course setting, participation in club relays or simply offering to pick up a few controls after a club event are all easy ways to contribute.

We can only hope that Covid-19 disappears in 2021! The year ahead is shaping up to be a busy one, with the usual allocation of park-street, Mel-bush-o and sprint events, plus we intend coordinating the Queen's Birthday weekend again and setting a sprint double header plus the Melbourne City Race. In what is a sign of the times, the 2021 fixture is being structured such that "backup" events can occur at short notice in either Melbourne or Regional Victoria should Covid-19 affect travel between either.

I would like to thank all club members and the Committee who have contributed to the operation of the club this year and I wish the President and Committee well for the upcoming year.

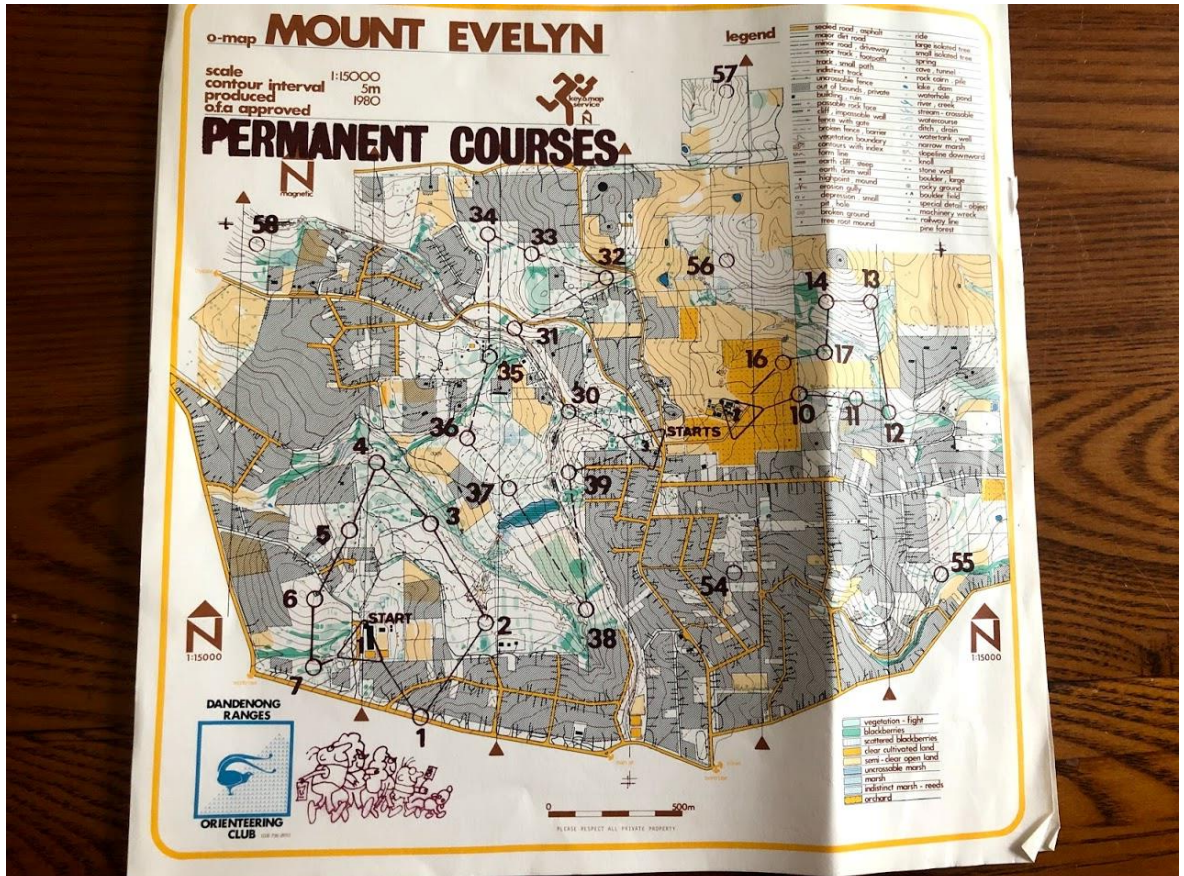
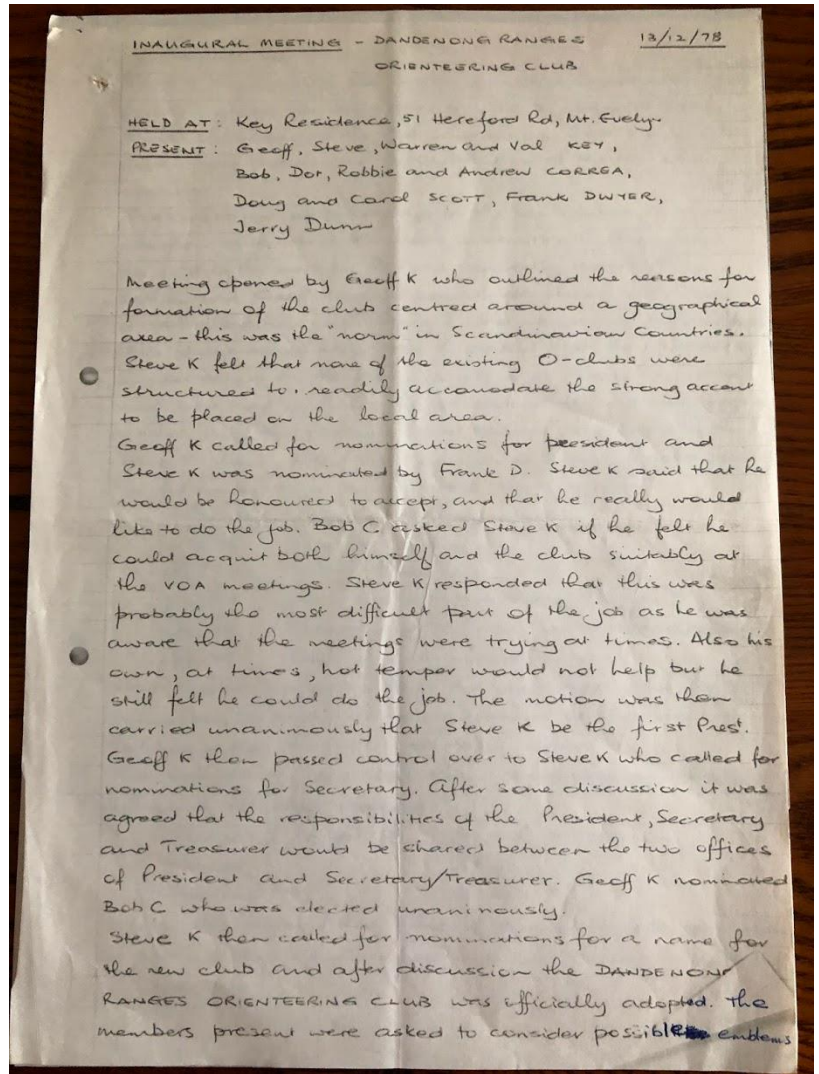
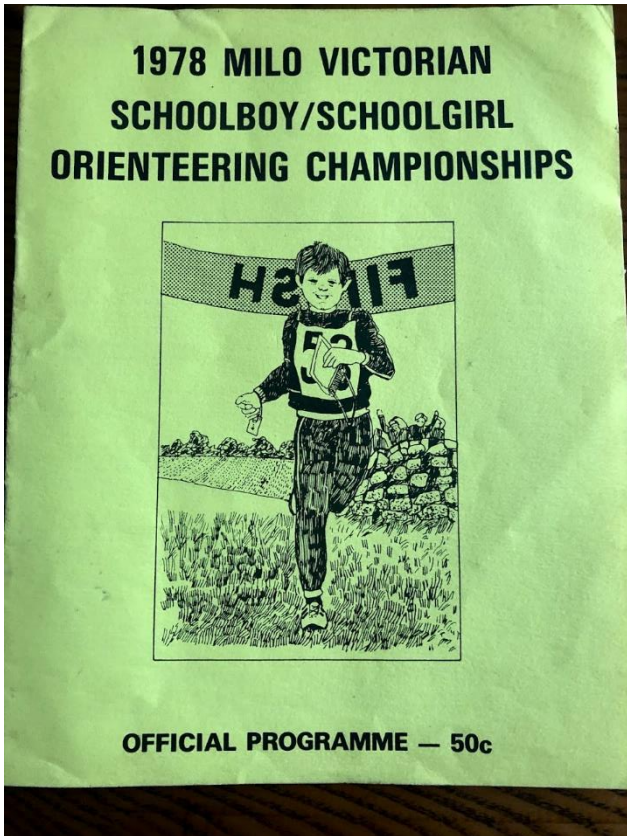
Peter Hobbs - 22 October 2020

Holding the AGM on Zoom - Secretary Sarah Love keeping things organised



40 YEARS OF HISTORY

While sorting through a box of paperwork, Sarah Love came across some ancient treasures, dating back to the early days of DROC. Recognise any of these?



CLASS M14 (3,100 M)

1Martin Steer	MiHS	24.39
2Darren Millett	BelHS	28.38
3John Agar	EC	28.42
4Edwin Smith	StKC	29.32
5Ian McCredie	MGS	34.29
6Stephen Dunbar	ChadHS	39.11
7Bradford Comrie	TC	43.40
8Alan Ryan	FGT	44.39
9Mark Sullivan	StKC	49.18
10Rupert Gardner	EC	55.31
11Barry Moon	MHSE	59.00
12Cameron McDougall	RoHS	62.47
13Darius Alekna	StKC	64.01
14Paul de Podolin- zky	UYHS	65.39
15Christopher Tur- ner	MT	81.42

ATTENTION!

To fellow patriotic members of D.R.O.C.

After the High-C weekend a few of us thought that D.R.O.C. should have a theme song. We found a tune you should all know (and it's NOT from "The Sound Of Music" !) then changed the words. So, at the start of the final Summer Series event, we hope that you all will have learned the words and sing with us... To the tune of "We Ain't Got A Barrel Of Money".

Oh, We all come from Dandenong Ranges,
Victories, to us, are not strangers,
For we travel along
With navigat-ion,
Side by side.

chorus: Through all kinds of landscape,
What if the hills are tall ?
Just as long as we're not back late,
It won't matter at all.

When we've all got our maps and we've started,
And to punch controls we've departed,
We will travel along
With navigat-ion,
Side by side.

chorus:
Now we've reached the end of the season,
D.R.O.C. will win - stands to reason !
For we travel along
With navigat-ion,
side by side.