

PUNCHLINE

Dandenong Ranges Orienteering Club Inc

www.drocorienteering.com.au

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OCEANIA SUCCESS IN TASSIE

DROC members have been travelling interstate for some big orienteering competitions. The biggest was the Oceania Championships, held in January on Tasmania's East Coast; followed by the Hobart Shorts. The club had some great results!

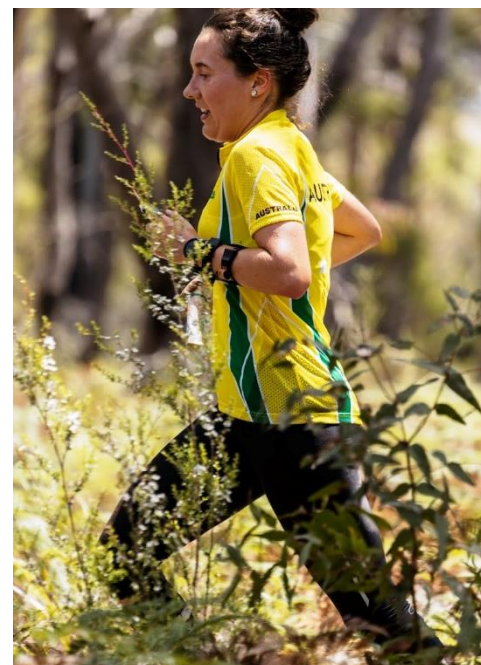
The week kicked off with the Oceania Sprint at the UTAS campus in Launceston, familiar ground for some, but always a good challenge. The action then moved to the St Helens area, for the Long and Middle Distance Champs, and the Relays. The Oceania Long Distance was a gruelling day on a very physical map with lots of bracken and fallen timber. The Oceania Middle Distance was on a new map in tin mining terrain, much less physical but more technical with small and subtle contour features as well as swamps and creeks.

Congratulations to our podium placers, and to everyone who gritted their teeth and toughed it out:

- Peter Dalwood (below) - second place in the Oceania Sprint, first place in the Oceania Relay
- Simon Rouse - third place in the Oceania Sprint, first place in the Oceania Relay
- Lanita Steer (right) - first place in the Oceania Relay
- Janine Steer - third place in the Oceania Relay
- Christine Palmer and Pamela King - second place in the Oceania Relay



Other strong performances came from Pam King, 4th in the Sprint; Simon Rouse, 4th in the Long Distance; Janine Steer, 5th in the Middle Distance. Lanita Steer was selected to represent Australia in the Australia-New Zealand Challenge team, and her team's win in the Relay, along with her top 10 placings in the individual events, helped Australia take a resounding victory over our neighbours across the ditch. *More photos inside.*



PREZ SEZ - Damian Spencer

January to March always seems like the off-season for me, with the summer heat and snakes restricting bush events, and Melbourne Sprint Weekend having its biennial hiatus. Perfect time, therefore, for club members to build their fitness and skills. That's the theory at least, although the Annual Club Relay competition at the start of April perhaps showed a few of us up! Usually, the Club Relays are held in Spring and conclude the bush season, but this year, they raised the curtain. Despite a smaller than normal contingent, we somehow built up enough points to be currently placed 5th in the Rockhopper Standings, a competition that I'm reliably informed has a robust and rational scoring system but which no one has ever been able to explain! Congratulations especially to Glenn Meyer, Sally Barlow and Elijah Spencer on a podium in the mixed division!

Apart from the relays, StreetO continues to be the main attraction during the summer. I love StreetO. Even though it does not have line courses nor many of the elements of traditional bush or sprint events, it's a great way to keep the fitness levels up, get some fresh air, and practice strategy and staying connected to the map at all times. Ian Davies, Matthew Grover, Pam King, Mark Besley, Dale Howe, Peter Yeates, Peter Dalwood and Debbie Dodd claimed overall podiums in various StreetO summer competitions, but the highlight of the season was the Park and Street Championships in February where we came away with 3 golds (Sarah Love, Ian Greenwood, Ros King) and 4 silvers (Tony Bird, Denise Pike, Peter Yeates, Pam King). Unfortunately, I was in India on the day, but I hear it was a great event with close racing on a typically balmy late-February evening.



Apart from local StreetO, DROC members did what orienteers do best in searching high and low and finding events to compete in interstate. It's one of the joys of the sport to travel, explore the country, have a mini-holiday and enter an orienteering event. The club had a strong contingent of members attend the Oceania Championships and Hobart Shorts in Tasmania in January (congratulations on podiums to Lanita Steer, Peter Dalwood, Simon Rouse, Janine Steer, Pam King and Christine Palmer), the Easter 3 Day in and around ACT (podiums to Lanita Steer and Will Meyer) and the Sydney Sprint Weekend (podium to Pam King).

Technically, though, the Dodds win this month's competition for the furthest away orienteering in Houston, USA, but you can read more about that at:

<https://dipidydoo.wordpress.com/2023/03/23/orienteering-at-last/>

Away from the track, Mike, Lanita and myself recently attended a course setting workshop in Woodend run by OV. Having only set a small number of courses previously, it was great to hear from some experts and gain some hands-on practice. I would highly encourage all members to give course setting a go. I find it helps as a participant to have some understanding of what a course setter may be thinking when planning an event. My experience is that you will receive plenty of support from senior DROC members along the way, so come and have a chat if you are interested.

Finally, the DROC Committee has been busy coming up with ideas for supporting and building the experience of club members at events, so stay tuned for some announcements in the near future. Happy navigating!

MEMBERSHIP

Please give a big DROC welcome to our newest member, Martin Sime, who joined the club in January. We look forward to seeing Martin at some events.

If you haven't yet renewed your 2023 membership, please do so as soon as possible, to ensure you continue receiving *Punchline*, plus all the other fantastic membership benefits!

SYDNEY SPRINT WEEKEND, MARCH

Emulating the Melbourne Sprint Weekend, Sydney offered five races over the March long weekend. Days 1's events at the University of Sydney (am) and UNSW (pm) - both near the CBD - but Day 2's races were out at Campbelltown. The final day was an informal one, as it is not a public holiday in NSW.

Pam King, Peter Dalwood, Peter Yeates and Ilze Yeates made the trip. All four contested the first day's events, with Pam and Peter D both placing 4th in Race 2. Pete and Ilze opted to see the sights of Sydney on Day 2, while Pam and Peter took to the field. Pam topped off her great weekend with a third place in the afternoon event.



EASTER 3 DAY, SNOWY-MONARO

Unseasonably cold weather dogged the 2023 Easter 3 Days, with rain, hail, sleet and even a touch of snow; temperatures did not climb into double figures. Nevertheless, the events went ahead, starting with a Sprint on Good Friday at the ANU Campus in Canberra. The three forest events were held in the Snowy Mountains, south of the ACT.

Making the trip were Janine and Lanita Steer, Mark Besley, Simon Rouse, and the Meyer family - Glenn, Maggie, Will and Ava. Lanita (right), competing for the Vic Vikings, had some outstanding results, taking third place in the Elite Prologue, and backing that up with a consistent three days to place 6th overall in Womens Elite.

Featuring on the podium in second place overall was Will Meyer in Open Easy, making his Easter debut along with sister Ava, who finished 6th overall in the same class - a superb effort by our juniors. Simon Rouse was also remarkably consistent, finishing 5th overall in the highly competitive M45A class. Janine Steer was another top 10 finisher, with 9th in W55A.



VICTORIAN CLUB RELAYS, WOOWOOKARUNG

DROC fielded four teams in the 2023 Victorian Club Relays, held at Woowookarung on open spur gully terrain, on Sunday April 2. Sally Barlow did a great job getting the teams together.

Our Course 1 team of Simon Rouse, Ian Davies and Damian Spencer tackled the complex 6 km course, finishing a very strong 4th out of 9 teams. On Course 3, the team of Peter Yeates, Ray Scaddan and Carl Stemp were comfortably midfield in 5th place. The Newburys were unable to defend their 2022 title on Course 4, with an unfortunate mispunch. But it was our Course 5 (Mixed) team, of Elijah Spencer, Glenn Meyer and Sally Barlow (on the podium, below left) that had the result of the day, in second place. Well done to all our teams!



DROC SHOP

The DROC Shop is open for business, and ready to get you kitted out for 2023 and beyond! We sell Sportident sticks, including SI Air sticks for those who want to speed up their race. [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.

Our fantastic new tops have arrived, and they look and feel absolutely amazing! We are already putting together a second order, so please speak to Peter Yeates. The running tops will cost \$44, or \$46 with mesh side panels. The jackets will cost \$70.

NEW MAP LIBRARIAN

After many many years of keeping the club's maps up to date and in order, and making sure course setters receive their map files, Pam King has retired as Map Librarian. She has handed the reins over to Rhys Eddy, who took over the job starting with the current Winter Series. Rhys is the person to contact if you are setting a DROC Park Street course - his email address is in the box at the top of Pg 1.

We owe a massive debt of thanks to Pam for an exemplary and essential job, ensuring that DROC maps are always high quality.

DIARY DATES - 2023

Sunday May 21 - Vic MTBO 2, Kurth Kiln, Gembrook. Course planner - Graham Wallis

DROC hosts a round of the Victorian Mountain Bike Orienteering series, on the tracks and among the tall timbers of and trails of this historic park on our doorstep.

Sunday June 11 (Kings Birthday Weekend) - Vic Series (Bush) 5, Gellibrand Hill. Course planners - Helen Walpole, Damian Spencer

This is the second event in a double header weekend close to Melbourne. Gellibrand Hill is the western part of Woodlands Historic Park. It features mostly open land with scattered granite, and a network of watercourses in the southern section - perfect for Middle Distance orienteering.

Saturday July 22 - EndurO, Bellbird Dell, Vermont. Course planner - Debbie Dodd

The Healesville Freeway Reserve is finally being converted into a recreational trail, opening up new routes through the centre of the map. To celebrate, we'll hold an EndurO - a long distance Park Street event on a larger map with 40 controls.

Sunday October 22 - Summer Shorts 1, Jells Park. Course planner - ???

Short distance fun at one of our favourite parks; ideal for families and newcomers.

Sunday October 29 - Summer Shorts 2, Tattersson. Course planner - ???

Scramble your brain at this amazing park with its bamboozling tree maze!

Sunday November 12 - Summer Shorts 3, Waverley Stadium. Course planner - ???

A real crowd pleaser on its debut in 2022, this complex map with the famous oval as its centrepiece will test your sprint navigational skills, as we get closer to the 2023 Victorian Sprint Champs.

Saturday November 19 - Summer Shorts 4, Oxley College (tbc). Course planner - James Love

With several additions to this compact campus, get yourself into full Sprint mode and tune up for the Champs.

Sunday November 20 - Melbourne City Race, Docklands. Course planner - ???

Back to where it all began - the 2023 Melbourne City Race will revisit the Docklands, Southbank and the western CBD - the highlight of the urban orienteering calendar!

COURSE PLANNERS STILL NEEDED

As you can see, we still have some course setting vacancies to fill for the later part of the year. These will be fun races with broad appeal to all levels of orienteer - perfect for a course planner looking to take on a little extra challenge and move to a higher level. Please let me know asap if you would like to know more.

We also have a handful of vacancies for Park Street course setting:

Wednesdays -

July 5, Tally Ho

July 26, Rowville Lakes

August 16, Notting Hill (Mt Waverley)

Saturdays -

August 26, Park Orchards

September 23, Middle Mullum (Donvale)

PARK STREET SUMMER SERIES - RESULTS

Monday

A Course - Ian Davies 3rd

D Course - Debbie Dodd 3rd

Wednesday

A1 - Ian Davies 1st, Matthew Grover 2nd

C2 - Peter Dalwood 2nd, Mark Besley 3rd

D2 - Dale Howe 1st, Peter Yeates 3rd

PW2 - Pam King 2nd

PARK STREET CHAMPIONSHIPS 2023

This year's Champs were held on Thursday February 23, on the [Springthorpe map](#), with courses set by Sheila Colls. Yarra Valley were the host club. Sheila's courses were highly acclaimed as both fun and challenging, on a map that offers a huge variety of terrain, and demands an equally wide variety of skills.

Nine DROC members contested this year's Final - congratulations to our Medallists!

Gold - Sarah Love, Ian Greenwood, Rosalind King

Silver - Tony Bird, Denise Pike, Peter Yeates, Pamela King

NEW MAPRUN RESULTS PAGE

I'm delighted to report that the MapRun online results page has had a long awaited overhaul! Instead of having to scroll through hundreds of events from all over the world, to find the one you want to see, now you can set filters for location, event name and date - meaning only the events you are interested in will be displayed. When you view the list, you can sort it by name, meaning you can group all results for a single event, together.

The results interface has a fresh, cleaner look; and you can also easily view tracks for multiple competitors, for better comparison and analysis.

The new MapRun results page is at <https://results.maprun.net/#/>

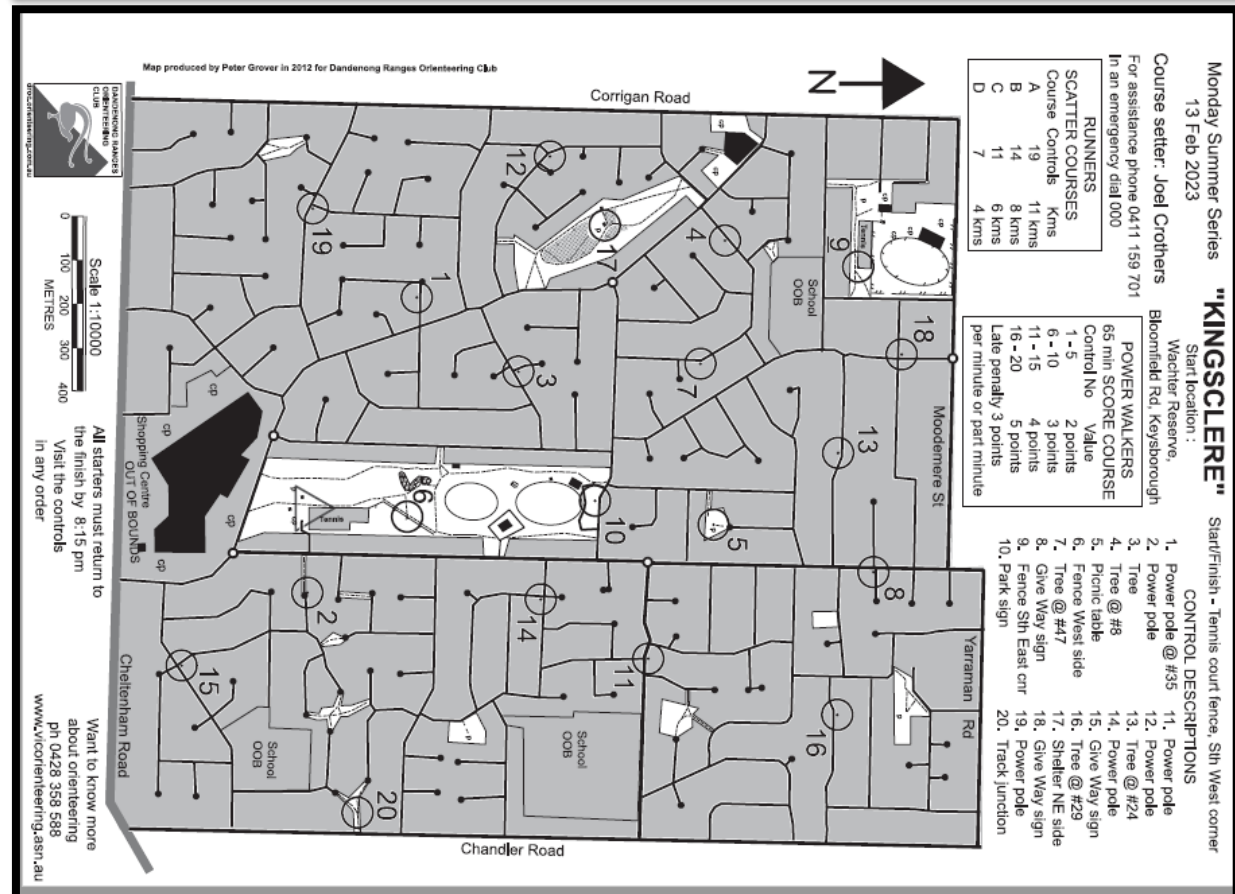
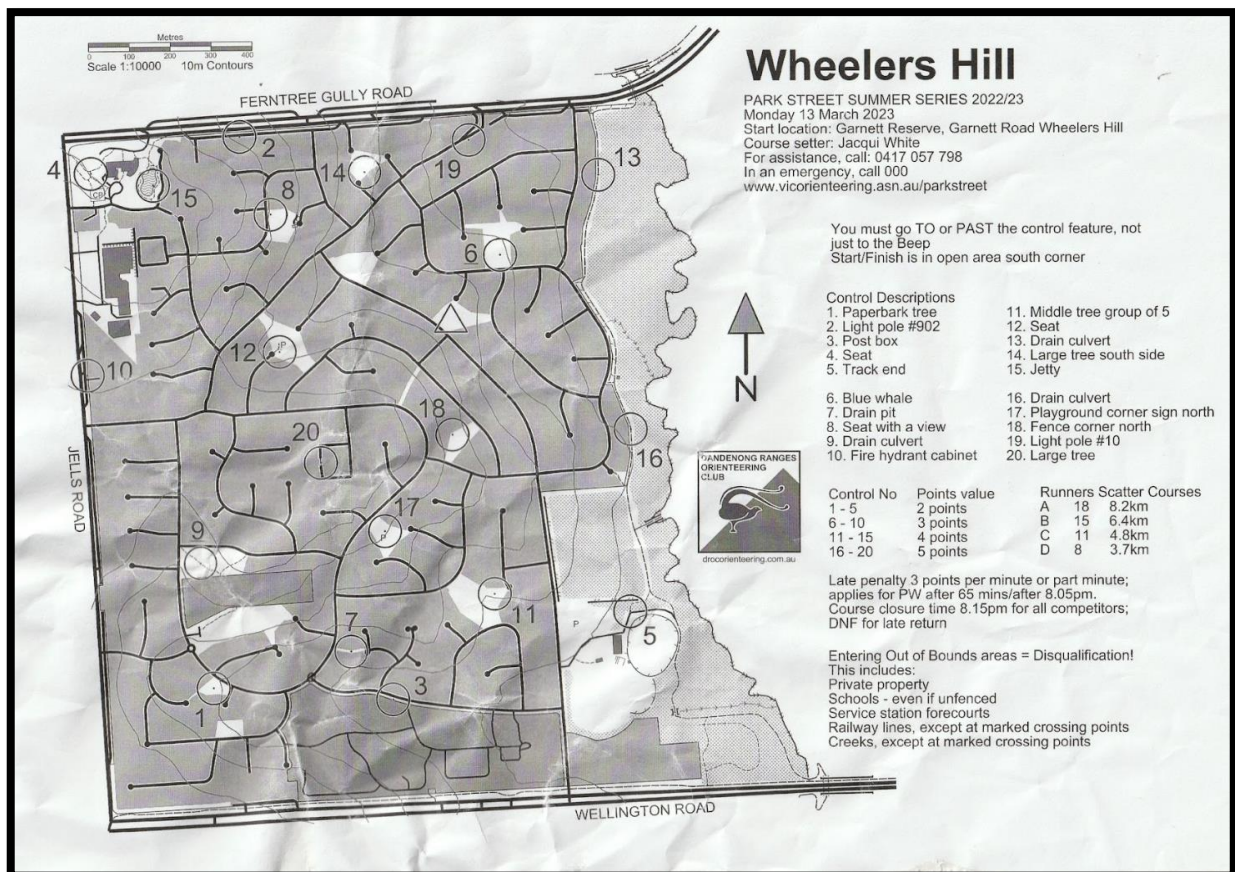


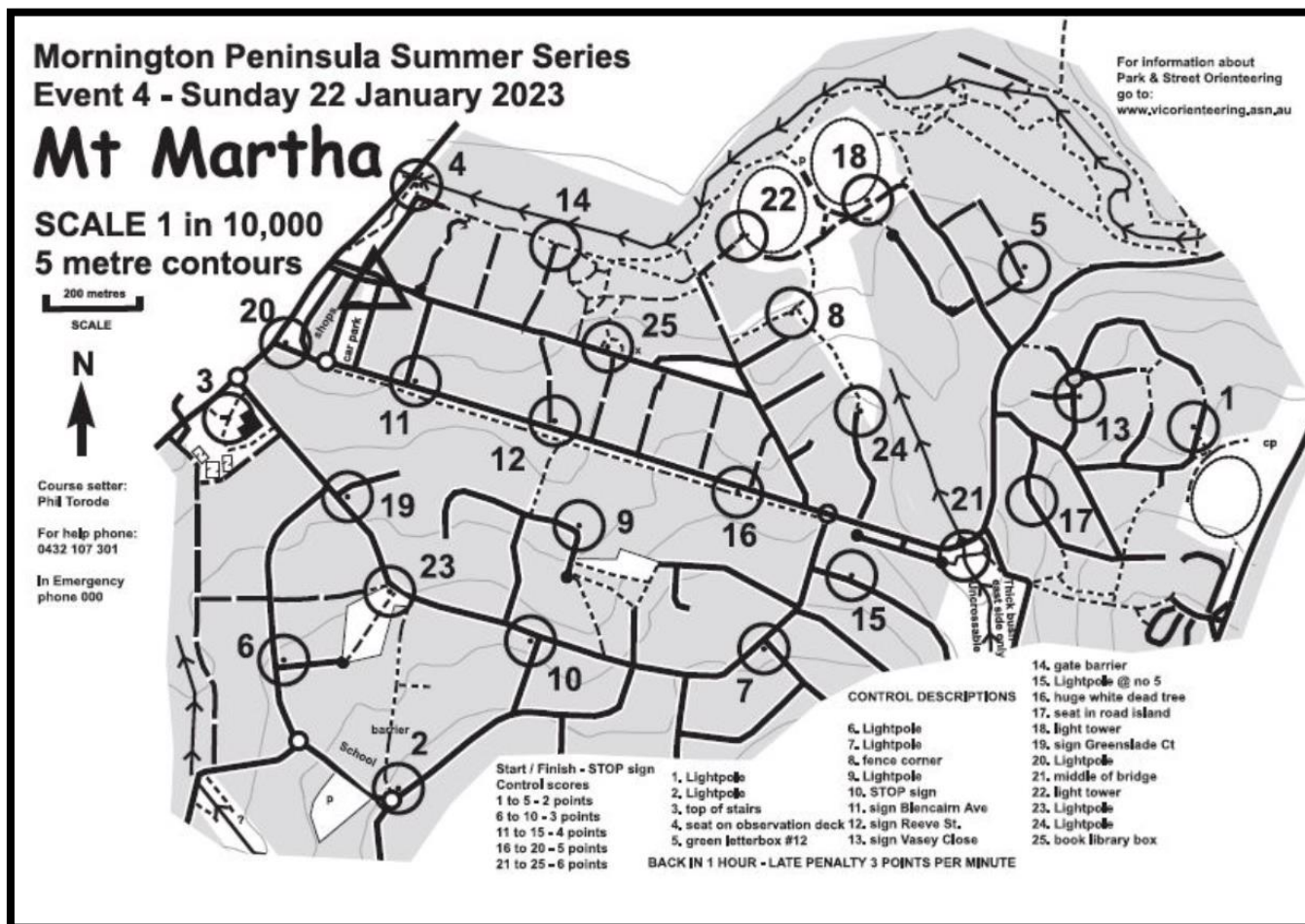
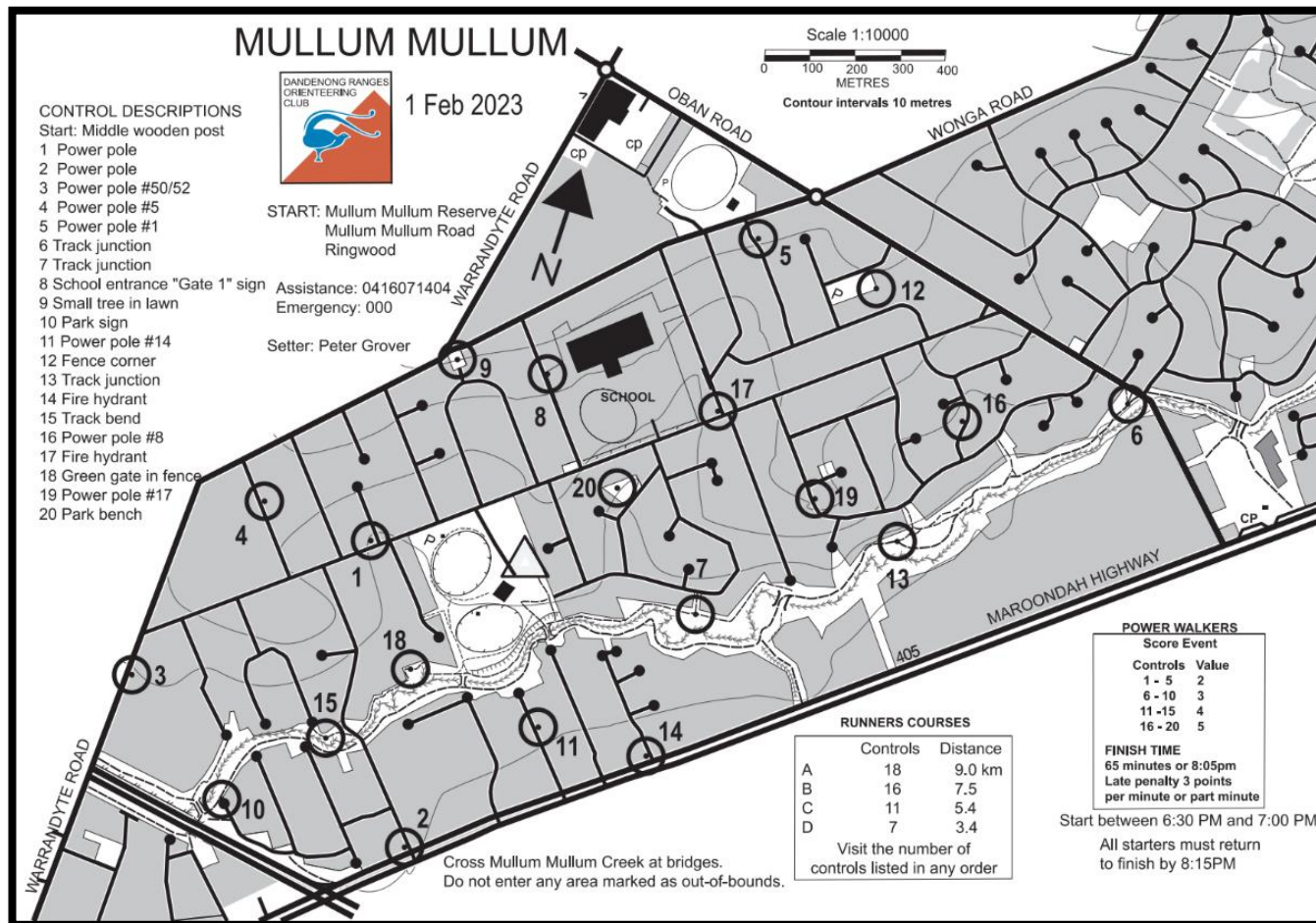
MapRun® Event Results v1.0.24		
Events Selector		
When: 3 days	Display Map	
Where: Victoria	Melbourne Park-StreetO	ALL
Event name contains: Event names contains...	Events: 5; Total Participation: 41	
Event ↑	Region	Area
Carrum Downs Sth 08-04-2023 ScorePW65 PXAS PZ0208042023 ScoreG65	Victoria	Melbourne Park-StreetO
Carrum Downs Sth 08-04-2023 ScoreRun45 PXAS PZ0208042023 ScoreG45	Victoria	Melbourne Park-StreetO
Carrum Downs Sth 08-04-2023 ScoreRun60 PXAS PZ0208042023 ScoreG60	Victoria	Melbourne Park-StreetO
Darebin Training - Short 31-07-2021 PXAC	Victoria	Melbourne Park-StreetO
Elsternwick Park 30-01-2023 ScorePW65 PXAS PZ0630012023 ScoreG65	Victoria	Melbourne Park-StreetO

TOP COURSES

Here's a selection of courses by DROC members so far this Summer. Most Summer Series maps are available online to use any time, with MapRun. [Download them from here.](#)

Wheeler's Hill - Jacqui White; Kingsclere - Joel Crothers





72 DEGREES SOUTH

In February, Ian and I boarded the *Roald Amundsen* expedition cruise ship in Ushuaia, at the southern tip of Argentina, and joined 300 or so other passengers on a two week Antarctic Circle voyage with Hurtigruten. It was one of the later sailings of the summer, and the ice was significantly reduced, enabling our ship to go well below the Antarctic Circle, at 66 degrees south. The initial objective was Marguerite Bay; somewhere where few other passenger ships venture. We crossed the Circle on Day 6 with due ceremony (we preferred to spectate rather than have ice cubes tipped over our heads), and pressed on.

We entered Marguerite Bay, after a tricky overnight navigation of the iceberg-filled Gullet. The ice was still low, and we began to hear talk of aiming for a record - 72 Degrees South, which would be the furthest south this ship, or any Hurtigruten ship, had ever sailed. To do this, we'd be entering unknown territory for the captain and crew, let alone the passengers - a true expedition.

Several days later, our eyes were glued to the huge screens which displayed our position in latitude/longitude. Our red dot inched ever more southward, and the numbers crept up over 70, the 71, then degree by degree to 72. Everyone was invited out onto the pool deck to devour specially baked cakes, and to hear the Captain's speech - he was genuinely excited and a bit emotional as we all clapped and cheered. Later, we all queued up to take selfies in front of the screen; though they wasted no time in turning around and heading north again.

Ian and I had another mission that day. Whilst Pete and Ilze hold the current record for The Most Northerly Point By a DROC Jacket, which is 71.9 degrees at the top of Norway (and Peter Dalwood still holds the DROC Jacket altitude record atop Mt Kilimanjaro), we knew we could smash the record for Most Southerly Point by a DROC Jacket. Of course this had to be recorded for posterity, so we dressed appropriately and stood proudly on the bow.

This day was undoubtedly a highlight, but there were so many others! In no particular order:

- Our first Zodiac (small rubber dinghy) cruise amongst icebergs; like being in a sea of meringue
- Snowshoeing and kayaking for Ian; a wildlife photography cruise for me, where we saw humpback whales right up close
- Penguin watching. Never gets boring.
- Holding our collective breaths as we sail through the seemingly impassable Gullet, at twilight.
- Being unable to eat dinner because we are too enthralled watching a pack of orcas hunt down frantic fur seals, through the floor to ceiling restaurant windows.
- Standing on an ice floe in the absolute middle of nowhere.
- Having a humpback whale surface right next to our Zodiac, on our last day.
- Weddell seals on their icebergs; they have the most beautiful faces.
- Standing inside an expedition hut that is exactly as it was 70 years ago.
- Standing on continental Antarctica (the vast majority of landings are on islands).
- Surviving both crossings of the Drake Passage.
- Realising that we have not seen a car, plane, billboard, or litter, for days.



Finding the maps



Heading out for a run



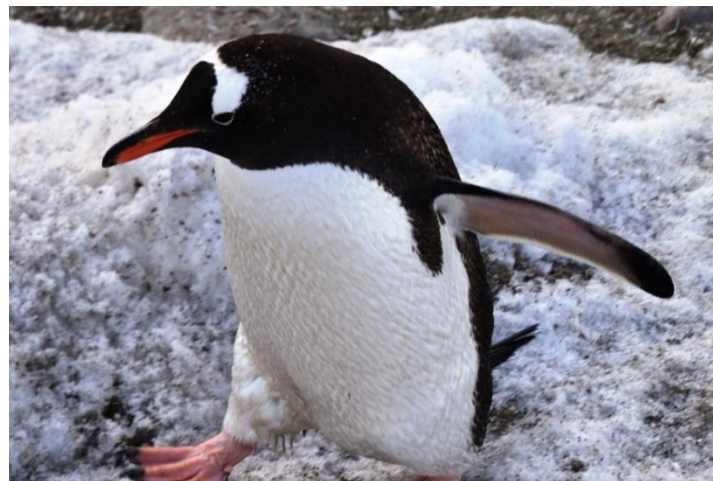
All this sea air is exhausting ...



Iceberg spotting



Seal siesta



Penguin crossing



Crossing the Antarctic Circle



72 degrees South (give or take)



DROC jackets at 72 degrees South



My very own ice floe



Continental landing

ORIENTEERING IN HOUSTON

After 6.5 weeks of an 8-week trip, we'd done precisely no orienteering (unless you count the onboard scavenger hunt during our Antarctic cruise. Ian beat me comprehensively so there is no more to be said about that). Mostly because of a lack of suitable terrain in the southern US, unless you fancy thickly vegetated swamps with no contour features but many alligators. There are clubs in both Florida and Texas, but they don't hold events very often. Urban orienteering doesn't seem to have taken hold in this part of the US - yet there are plenty of suitable places for it.

Eventually I managed to dig up a permanent course map, comprising Hermann Park and Rice University, close to downtown Houston. There is a large green park, a well known zoo, a golf course with lots of "keep off" signs, a large university campus, and a medical/hospital district. Sound familiar? Rather like Royal Park/Parkville/Melbourne Uni, the route choices are determined mostly by the out of bounds areas. Nevertheless we had a map, control features, and questions to be answered. It is not set up on MapRun, so we took photos of each answer, to verify later (all correct).

We did not start at the start triangle, because the car park there was overflowing, so we began at no 2. Our route from there was 16-15-3-20-19-1-4-8-9-12-13-14-11-7-6. Our free parking ran out after that, so we dropped 5, 18, 17 and 10.

We were not racing, or even running. We combined the course with a chance to sightsee in this lovely green space, and to meander through the campus of Rice University. We even ate lunch on the way. Control 11 was an outlier, but we were keen to see the site where John F Kennedy gave his famous "We Choose To Go To The Moon" speech in September 1962. It took us about 2.5 hours at our leisurely pace, although we did pick up speed about halfway through.

The first few controls took us past statues, monuments and ornamental lakes, as well as to an outdoor sound shell on a grassy slope - think The Tan and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. We reluctantly forewent the chance to ride a pedalo boat or take the miniature railway. Between controls 19 and 1, we were restricted to a gravel path through the golf course - think Royal Park or East Malvern. Here we met numerous ducks, of types I've never seen; and the cheeky squirrels which inhabit most parks where there are people and food.



Anyone seen a Monument?

Control 8 - count the steps



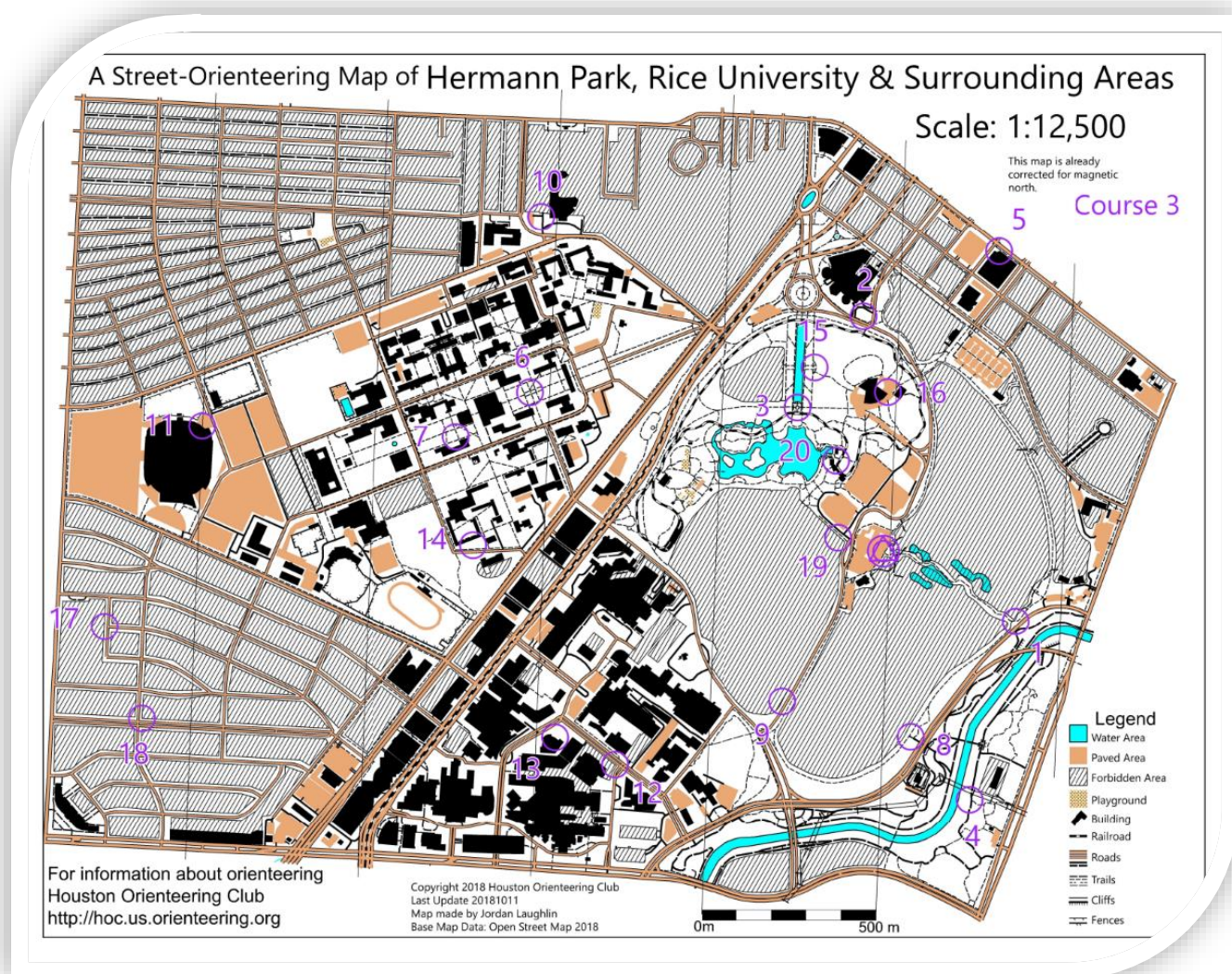
Crossing two busy roads, we were now in the Rice University campus, which covers 300 acres. It's a pity there aren't more controls in here; it's possibly too open to make a really tricky sprint map, but it is full of gorgeous spreading trees (4000 of them) forming long shady avenues, and Italianate buildings with colonnades, ornamental brick facades, and even turrets and Juliet balconies. We were

Control 6 - name the sculpture



able to see the football field where the aforementioned speech was delivered. Rice has always had, and continues to have, close links to NASA and the space industry.

The great thing about being able to pick up an orienteering map is that it takes you to places which you might not otherwise visit. This part of Houston was completely different from the urban sprawl and the freeway jungle that we'd seen to date, and it was an enjoyable walk (and some much needed brain exercise too).



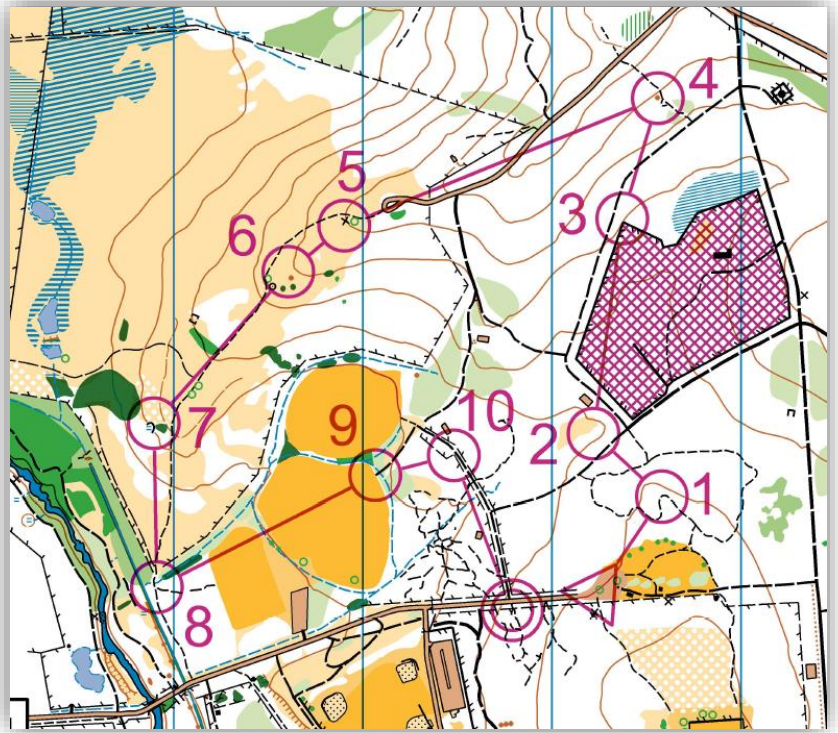
GOING BUSH

As the weather cools, many club members look forward to getting out into the bush on Sundays. If you haven't done this before, getting started can be a bit daunting, raising questions like "Where do I buy a compass?" "What should I wear?" "What's a Line course?" "Which course should I do?" And most importantly, "What happens if I get lost?"

For newcomers to bush orienteering, the best place to start is with MelBushO. As the name suggests, these are bush/park events close to Melbourne, designed to get you started with the basics of bush orienteering without the pressure of high level competition. At a MelBushO event, you can borrow compasses and Sportident timing devices, take advantage of free coaching, and test your skill level on one or more courses. Easy courses are mostly on tracks or across open country where the next control will be easy to spot as you approach it. These are ideal for younger orienteers, families, and anyone with only a small amount of outdoor experience.

Moderate courses will use a mix of tracks and cross country legs, with the reassurance of a very obvious "catching feature" such as a road, fence or creek, to prevent you going too far wrong. Perfect for older kids, or inexperienced adults who have a bit of outdoor experience eg bushwalking.

From Easy and Moderate courses, you can progress onto Hard courses. There will be a choice of three course lengths - Short, Medium and Long - and you can pick whichever distance suits you. Hard courses will almost always offer cross country as the shortest route between controls, although there may be track options. You'll need to know how to use a compass, how to read contours, and how to recognize various features. The beauty of MelBushO is that you can choose whichever type of course you feel comfortable with. You can also choose your own start time between 10am and 11.30am - and you don't have to drive too far - so you can fit in other Sunday afternoon activities. The kids will love the chance to get dirty, splash around in puddles, see wildlife, and go on a "treasure hunt". Right: an *Easy line course at Police Paddocks*.



To answer the questions:

You can borrow a compass at Registration; once you decide whether you want to purchase one, we can advise you on the best places to shop.

You should wear comfortable walking clothes, and shoes that have some grip on the sole. If you have gaiters, these can be handy if you are going off-track. You should also wear a watch, as there is a cut-off time that you must return by.

If you have some experience with Park Street orienteering, you'll understand Scatter and Score courses. Line courses are where you visit each control in numerical order (1-2-3 etc), with the aim being to complete the course and return to the Finish, in the shortest time.

You may find yourself temporarily "geographically challenged" - all part of the fun - but you won't get completely lost. You have a very accurate map, which will have a clear perimeter such as roads, large tracks, or park fences. You will always be able to make your way back to the Start by following a safety bearing. There are always lots of other people out on the course at the same time; feel free to ask for assistance at any time. There is always an assistance phone number to call, so we suggest you carry a mobile phone. And we always keep very careful track of who has started and who has finished, so at the end of the event, we know exactly who is missing; we have search and rescue procedures in the highly unlikely event they are needed. For this reason, we request that everyone reports in at the Finish, even if you don't complete your course; and that everyone provides a contact phone number.

MelBushO events are held between March and September, on one or two Sundays each month. To find out dates and locations, and to answer more questions, visit <https://www.vicorienteering.asn.au/go-orienteeing/bush-orienteeing/melbusho/>

From MelBushO, you can progress to Vic Series events, which are generally held in central Victoria. They are very similar to MelBushO, offering a smooth progression between the two. Higher level competition is offered by Victorian and national Championships.

Bush orienteering puts you on a constant learning curve; it can be as casual or as competitive as you want it to be. It puts you on a pathway to interstate and overseas travel; or it just gets you out of the house for a few hours! If you would like to try bush orienteering, contact any of the DROC Committee (see pg 1) for advice and assistance.

PHOTO GALLERY - OCEANIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Top: Simon Rouse, Sally Barlow

Bottom: Mark Besley, Christine Palmer

