



06 Newsletter

August 2025

In this Issue:

The season continues with successful local events held at Kimbolton, Sedgwick South and Smiths Reef.

In this issue Neil Barr gives his take on route choice on two long legs at Colin Walker's Kimbolton event and a report on upcoming mapping projects. As well, we have an article on orienteering – Northern Territory style – from Tony and Allison Radford. A great place to be at this time of year. The Black Crow also makes an appearance – see last page.

Thanks to all contributors of articles and photos – Neil Barr, Tony and Alison Radford and Prue Dobbin.

In late breaking news, Michael Tolhurst placed first in course 1 at the MTBO event at 'Rumble in the Bungal' on August 2, and Jim Russell won M55 at the SA Middle Distance Championships at Zellerfeld on August 10. Congratulations to Michael and Jim.

Dianne and Peter

COMING EVENTS

Local Bendigo and nearby Victorian events coming up in June are listed below. For full details, including directions to each event go to the Eventor website.

Sunday August 17

Event type: Vic Series #7

Map: Nuggety Range

Organizer: Melbourne Forest Racers

Saturday August 23

Event type: Bendigo Bush Events

Map: One Eye, Heathcote

Organizer/Course setter: Neil Barr

Saturday August 30

Event type: Vic MTBO Series #4

Map: Joyces Creek, Sandon

Organizer: Bayside Kangaroos

Sunday August 31

Event type: Vic Series #8

Map: Joyces Creek, Sandon

Organizer: Bayside Kangaroos

Saturday September 6

Event type: Bendigo Bush Event

Map: Kangaroo Gully

Organizer/Course setter: Julie Flynn

Sunday September 7

Event type: Ballaraat Local Event

Map: Little Hard Hills

Organizer: Eureka Orienteers

RECENT EVENTS

Saturday July 12, Kimbolton

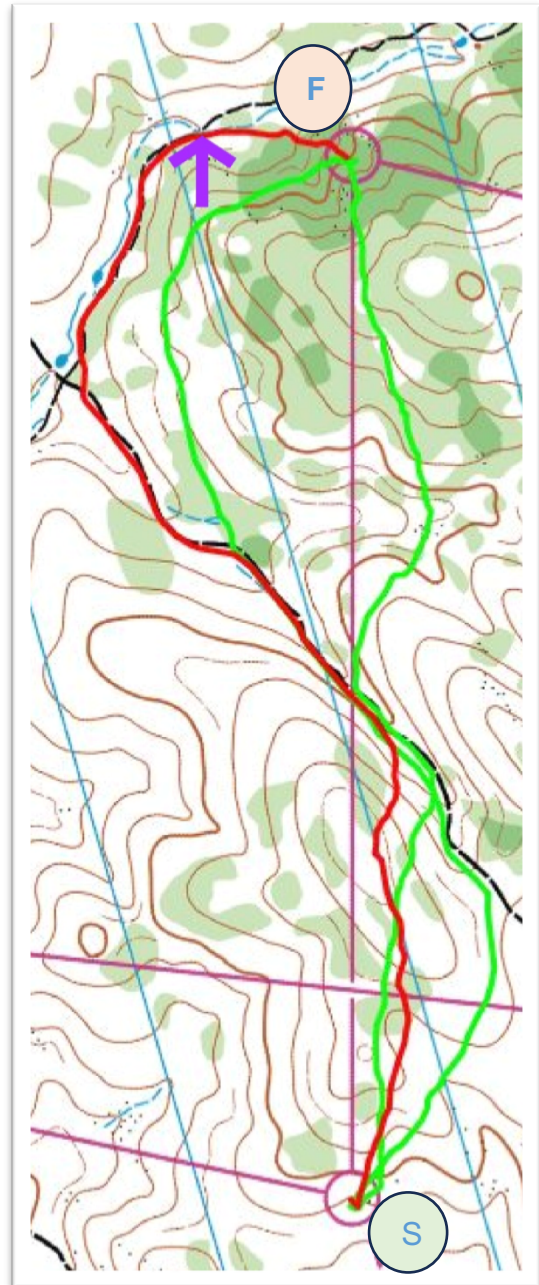
Colin Walker set some challenging courses on typical spur/gully terrain with few rock features. Neil Barr's analysis below of two course legs gives us an idea of what the options were and how a few competitors fared.

Master Course Setting at Kimbolton

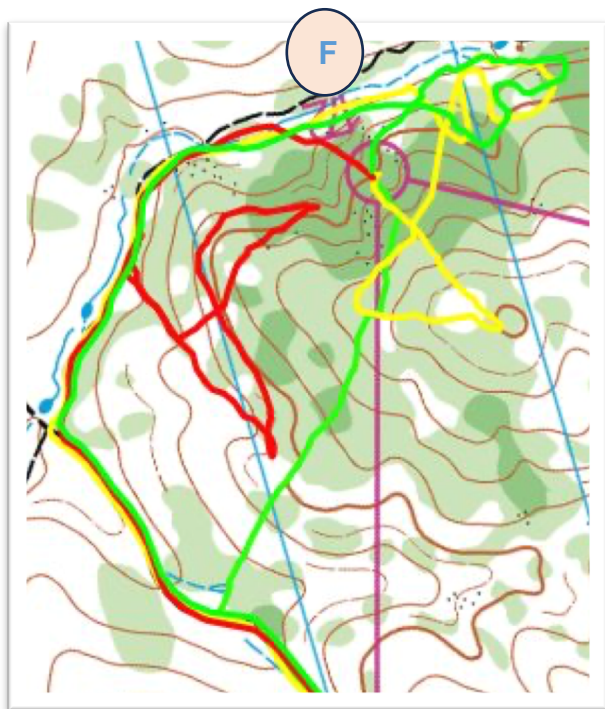
Colin Walker has always been a spur-gully specialist, and his skills were on display at Kimbolton. Two legs in particular gave some competitors trouble. It's no coincidence that these were the longest two legs on the course. It is always hard to set route choice conundrums in the red line terrain of areas such as Kimbolton. These two examples show that longer legs are necessary to challenge navigation.

The first of these legs – designated S (start) to F (finish) - featured a control in lower visibility green on the downhill side of a ridge. The three main route choices were:

- A- Straight line over two hills and then down to the control through green (the right-hand route in the diagram). This is the shortest option, but has a potentially risky descent through the green. It also has 3 or 4 extra contours of climb.
- B- Approaching the control by sidling across the final hillside. This allows you to count gullies which is generally safer than a descent. It is longer and also involves a similar length of green terrain.
- C – Down the tracks and then approach the control from below. The crucial decision on this approach is finding a point on the track where you know exactly where you are. The strongest attack point is shown with the purple arrow, where the track crosses the creek. There is another weaker attack point down stream where the creek goes near the track. This closer to the control, but could be easily missed.



So, which was the best option? Route gadget suggest B was superior. Most errors were made by those approaching from below (C). Runners were not sure where they left the track or creek.

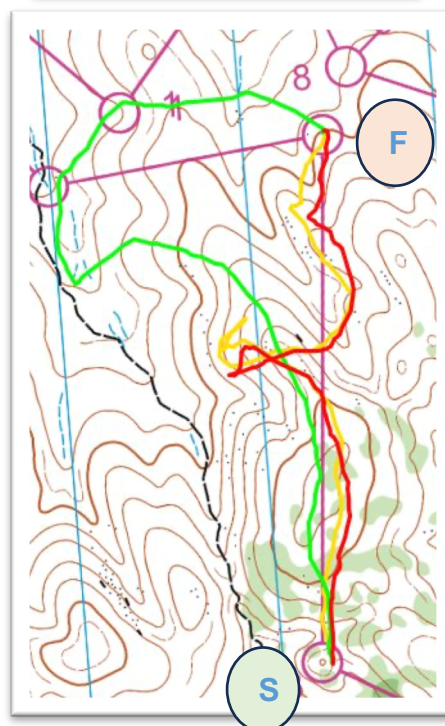
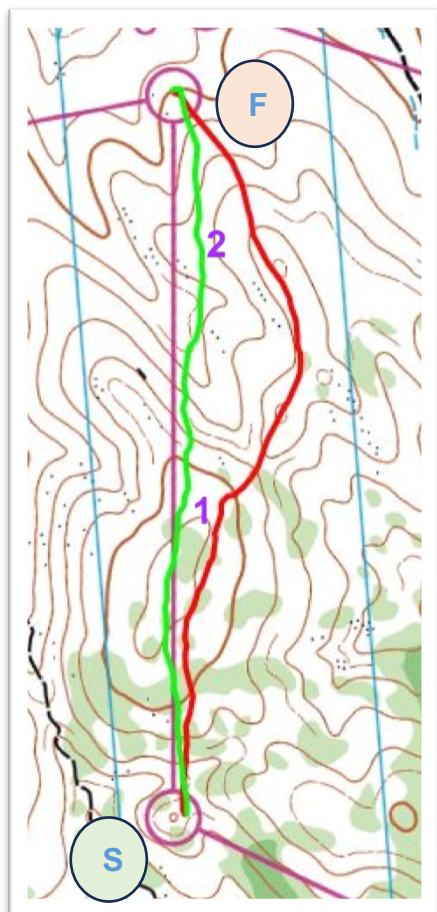
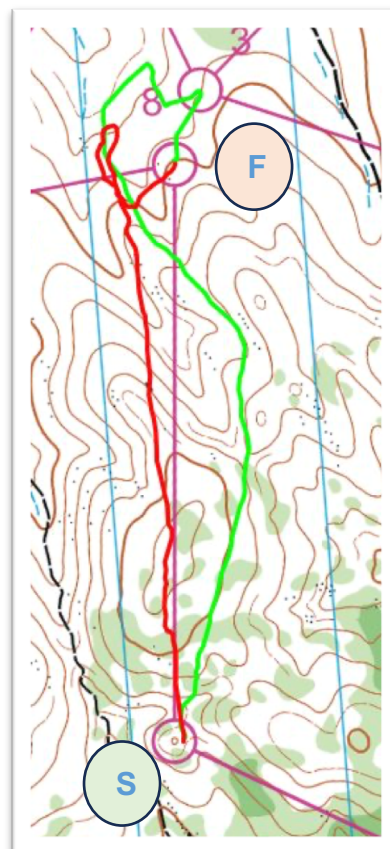


(A) Run straight and keep accurate track of which gully and spur you crossed (**Green line**). This has two decision points (1 & 2) where it is important to choose the correct spur.

(B) Follow the ridge line to the right (**Red line**). This is a little longer but avoids decision point 2 as the ridge leads you onto the correct spur. This makes it safer.

Errors were made at both decision points, surprisingly point 1 proved the more challenging.

The second leg [S (start) to F (finish)] exploited a standard course setter trick – sending orienteers down a series of branching spurs. There were two strategies.



Saturday August 9, Smiths Reef

Nola Juniper and Lorraine Leversha organized the event at Smiths Reef – another day of wonderful sunny weather and great orienteering courses. Some members took the opportunity to update their SI cards, with Jim Russell providing the technical expertise.

Saturday August 2, Sedgwick South

The courses at Sedgwick South were set by James Robinson and Jayne Sayles. However when James was selected in the Australian MTBO team to compete in the World Championships in Poland, they became unavailable to be at Sedgwick on the day. The organization of the event then morphed into a joint effort from Bendigo and Melbourne Forest Racers.

There were concerns that the day was going to be wet and cold so the Sedgwick Hall was rented for the day so people could escape the elements before and after their run. As it turned out it was a warm sunny day and everyone gathered outside the hall for post mortem discussion and afternoon tea – a great day was had by all.



Noodles in Litchfield

Tony Radford, Bendigo Orienteers M75 (and Alison Radford W70, who shadowed our grandchildren over a well-set easy course)

There are plusses and minuses about orienteering in the Top End. Amongst the plusses, it's warm, it rarely rains in the dry season, and there is some spectacular scenery. Amongst the minuses, the 'warm' can be uncomfortably hot (even in mid-winter with an early morning start), and the terrain can be dense jungle where a direct route following a compass bearing needs a bulldozer.

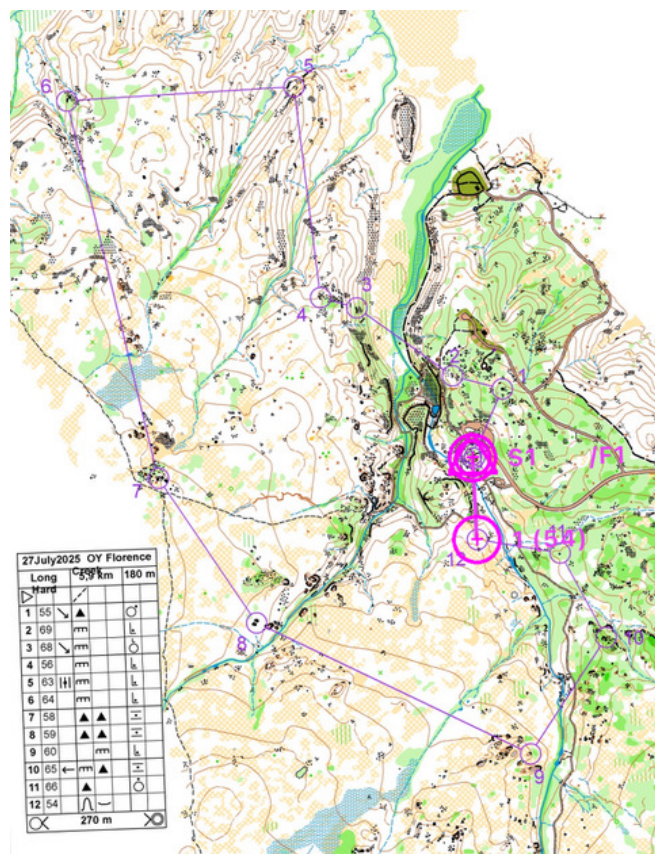
With grandchildren and family in Darwin (and July/August being decidedly cold in Castlemaine), we found ourselves orienteering in Litchfield National Park on 27 July. Having come a long way, I made the most of the opportunity by tackling the long course. With a wicked sense of humour, the course setter placed the first control on an overgrown rocky ridge that needed Territorian determination to push through the limb-grabbing undergrowth. This, though, was only to highlight how delightfully clear most of the terrain was, and for me it was a thoroughly enjoyable course, with some memorable legs over bright-green, freshly sprouting ground cover between exotic rock formations. Near the end, dark green on the map promised a second overgrown rocky spur, but this was just another example of the course setter's wit. The tangled understory had been reduced to ashes after a controlled burn.

Orienteering events in Scandinavia sometimes offer hot showers at the finish. This one offered delightful plunge pools with fresh running water, cooling the body and rinsing off the crust of sweaty soot.

Instead of SI-Air and metal stands, the event was retro-style: O-flags tied to tree branches with needle punches and cardboard control cards. No electronics, no computers (and perhaps no checking of the control cards, but I didn't ask and didn't care). I reckon the absence of SI technology decreased my enjoyment of the event by about 0.05% and saved the organisers around 33% in the effort required to set things up and collect controls. For major events let's go the whole hog with all the current technology, but it is not essential to enjoy our sport.

Thanks to Top End Orienteers and everyone involved in the event. I am happy to clarify that the 'Noodles in Litchfield' in the title to this short

report were on the pool fence at the caravan park where we stayed to be ready for an early start, and not, this time, in the tracing of my route.





Mapping Activity – Neil Barr

Smiths Reef - Rob Edmonds of Nillumbik Emus has updated most of the track network. The updated version of the map is now on the club map web site and in the hands of course setters.

One-Eye - Mapping completed for the northern mining section of the map. There has only been light fieldwork in the southern spur gully section, but it will be useable.

Fiddlers Green - The map is slowly being extended to the north. By next season the map will extend to Old Tom Mine if all goes to plan.

Black Crow Nomination

The infamous bird has been resurrected.

The lucky recipients of this nomination are Neil Barr and Michael Loughnan (and perhaps Colin Walker gets an honourable mention). Following the White Hill No 4 event, the box of charging equipment for the laptop, tablet etc disappeared. Michael insisted it wasn't at his residence but was in the trailer. Neil and Colin searched the trailer to no avail. Two events were held using SIME rather than the laptop, but the charging box did not appear. At this point Neil ordered replacements on line (after a failed trip to Melbourne to source the items supposedly in stock). Of course, the next day, the charging box was spotted in the far back of the trailer behind the tables, signs and chair. (see photo) It could not have been more perfectly hidden, and how it got there is a mystery. If this ever happens again, we will have a spare set of chargers in the shed (not the trailer!!!)



The disappearing charging box revealed!