



05 Newsletter

August 2026

Welcome to the August Newsletter

As we head into spring orienteering competitions begin to ramp up. A reminder that the Victorian Relays are on August 23 and that Bendigo is hosting the Victorian Short Championships on September 19. In other news Keely Williams has been selected in the Victorian Team to contest the Australian Schools Championships as part of the Oceania Championships in Canberra in late September. As well, Ted and Margi are in Ireland competing in the OOCup followed by the World Masters Championships in Poland in August. Good luck to all! On the international scene, Blair Trewin has been elected as Vice President of the International Orienteering Federation. Congratulations, Blair

This edition of the newsletter includes an interview with Daryl Fleay as well as his views on course setting – an invaluable guide and encouragement to members wishing to develop this orienteering skill. Prue Dobbin has some practical hints on dealing with ankles – a common injury among orienteers

Dianne and Peter

President's Report

Hi everyone. We are half way through our year and we have already run many successful events. Some of these have been on newly mapped areas thanks to the work of Neil Barr. New areas always provide us with exciting challenges. Thanks to the organisers of these events and to the people who helped them on the day. So far, the weather has been fairly kind to us – only a couple of events had rain but they still went ahead.

I would like to remind members that our club has defibrillator that is at each event. Hopefully we don't need to use but it is there if required and some of our members know how to use it. Instructions are with the unit. Jim Russell is looking at getting a 'club' mobile phone that will be at events as well – for contacting missing people and uploading results etc.

As of 26th June our membership is 90, 78 adults (33 female and 45 male) 12 junior members. Not all club members have provided a phone number or an emergency contact. Nola is following up with these people, with the details for 7 people still to go. This is a priority as it affects safety at events and is a requirement of Orienteering Australia.

Margi Freemantle will be managing the update of the club website. Thanks Margi.

50th Anniversary of Bendigo Orienteers: The Bendigo O club formed in Jan 1977. I would like someone or a small group of members to start work on a possible celebration for early next year. A 40th anniversary event was held on 27th May 2017.

Cheers to all, John Wilkinson (President).

COMING EVENTS

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

Saturday July 25

Event type: Bendigo Series #14
Map: One Eye West
Organizer: Colin Walker
Start: From 12:30pm

Sunday July 26

Event type: Vic Series #7
Map: Sailors Diggings, Daylesford
Organizer: Bayside Kangaroos OC
Start: From 10.00am

Saturday August 1

Event type: Bendigo Series #15
Map: Diamond Hill North
Organizer: Heather Jones
Start: From 12:30pm

Saturday August 8

Event type: Training day – FREE
Map: Birds Reef
Organizer: Nigel McGuckian
Start: From 12.30pm
(See details below)

Saturday August 15

Event type: Bendigo Series #16
Map: Sydenham Hill
Organizer: Julie Flynn
Start: From 12:30pm

Sunday August 23

Event type: Victorian Club Relays
Map: Smiths Reef, Maldon
Organizer: Vic Vikings
Start: TBA

Saturday August 29

Event type: Bendigo Series #17
Map: Andersons Diggings
Organizer: Michael Loughnan
Start: From 12:30pm

Sunday September 6

Event type: Victorian Middle Distance Championships
Map: Jubilee Lake, Daylesford
Organizer: Bayside Kangaroos OC
Start: From 10.00am

Saturday September 12

Event type: Bendigo Series #18
Map: One Tree Hill
Organizer: Peter Forbes
Start: From 12:30pm

Saturday September 19

Event type: Victorian Short Distance Championships
Map: Tappit Hen, Tarnagulla
Organizer: Ted van Geldermalsen
Start: From 10.00am

Sunday September 20

Event type: Victorian Long Distance Championships
Map: Metcalfe
Organizer: Nillumbik OC
Start: From 10.00am

MTBO Events

Sunday September 13

Event type: Vic MTBO Series #5
Map: Woodlands-Gellibrand, Greenvale
Organizer: Yarra Valley OC
Start: From 10.00am

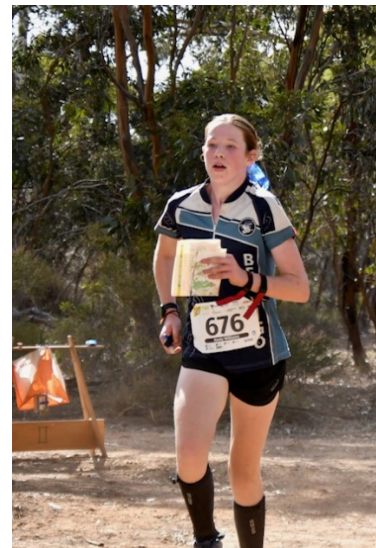
Bendigo Members Training Day

Erosion Gully training Aug 8th

This is a training event. There will be 15 controls scattered on the Birds Reef map. You can take your own time or set a goal of finding them in 45 minutes. Only 30 maps will be available. Course open from 12.30 to 2pm. Controls will be collected from 2pm. Pre entry not required. There is no fee.

Follow O signs on Kangaroo Gully road.

Nigel McGuckian 0418 510 644



Keely selected in ASOC team

Our new tops are coming!

Our new orienteering tops have been ordered and are being prepared. The cost to members is \$25 per top. If you ordered a running top, you have two options to pay.

1. Through Eventor (using credit card or PayPal)
<https://eventor.orienteering.asn.au/Events/Show/24393>

2. EFT deposit into the club account
Name: BENDIGO ORIENTEERS INC.
BSB: 633000
Account number: 53076063

Tops can be collected once payment has been received. There will be another chance to order a top later in the year.

Neil Barr interviews master course-setter Daryl Fleay

Daryl, when did you start Orienteering?

I entered my first orienteering event in 1972 – on a black-and-white map of One Tree Hill in Bendigo. As a complete novice, I made the course more difficult by interpreting the 'index' contours on the map as tracks. However, I was already hooked by the challenge and the enjoyable experience.

Yes, I suspect we all had embarrassing mistakes at our first orienteering event. I'm not sharing mine.

When did you first set an Orienteering course? What map? I set my first Orienteering course on the black-and-white One Tree Hill map in the early 1970's.

Presumably there weren't many maps to choose from back then.

How many courses do I think I have set?

I would guess that I've set one or two events in most years since 1972.

That would be over 70 courses. You obviously enjoy the task.

What do like about the task of course-setting?

I enjoy the strategic aspect of course-setting, and also the sheer joy of plotting courses in the field.

What are your preferences for terrain/ type of course?

My favourite terrain is Granite. My favourite type of course is traditional line Orienteering.

Not everyone in the club shares your love of granite terrain, but I do.



Daryl in non-orienteering mode

Looking back, which events that you set courses for stand out in your memory?

Diamond Hill – Victorian Long-distance Championships – mid-1970's
Kangaroo Gully – Victorian Long-distance championships – early 1980's
Australian Long-distance championships – Warby Ranges – 2009 (World-ranking event)
Australian 3-days – Easter 2013 – Yorkshire Hill - Middle Distance, World-ranking event
I remember three of those events. The Kangaroo Gully course stood out that year. As I was running my course I could see that you had a purpose for every one of the legs. It was almost like reading the mind of the course setter. The Yorkshire Hill event was a special privilege – setting an event inside the closed catchment for the Spring Gully Reservoir. There has only ever been one other event on that map- two events in 13 years!

Is there any one course that you are particularly proud of?

The 2013 Easter event, as I was awarded the Course-setter of the year trophy for that event. *As controller for that event, my abiding memory is of how close we came to disaster when an early test runner came back to report a control was missing. We had to run out and quickly replace it before the first official starts. Turns out someone had climbed through the fence and thrown the control into the lake. It appeared some years later when the water level dropped. This explains why we lock our controls.*

What makes a good course?

A good course should be fair, challenging and suited to the terrain. The course should meet all of the guidelines in my article 'Setting Orienteering Courses'.

Daryl, your early advice to me was to make sure my courses were enjoyable. That led me to think about what I actually enjoyed in courses and to find out what other orienteers did and didn't enjoy.

What regular mistakes do you see in other courses?

Controls placed on the wrong feature, lack of route choice, unfair (Bingo) controls, lack of imagination. This is usually a result of spending too little time at the course planning stage.

How long did it take you to learn to set good courses?

Probably about 5 years, with further development based on subsequent experience/mentoring.

You are a fast learner! It has taken me longer.

Any advice for aspiring course-setters?

Seek advice from experienced course-setters early in your course-setting career.

Thank-you Daryl!

Daryl Fleay on Course Setting

The aim of this article is to share some of my ideas and experience, and to provide encouragement to newer members to have a go at course setting, which is one of the most rewarding and enjoyable aspects of the sport of Orienteering. It's not an easy skill to develop, and, as in most aspects of life, there is no substitute for experience. What I know about course-setting has been built up through experience and some valuable mentoring from the legendary Alex Tarr. There's always a different slant on this important topic. Here's mine.

Orienteering events take place in a variety of locations and there are basic rules of good course-setting that apply equally to all types of terrain used. It's just as difficult to set good courses on a simple street or park map as on a map covering complex granite or gold mining terrain. We all try to set courses that are fair and provide a challenge appropriate to the respective age class or degree of difficulty. But, course-setting is not just about selecting good control locations and then simply connecting them with straight lines.

Here are the basic principles that I believe are important if you want to set good courses:

Starting area

In any type of terrain, it's important to select a starting area that provides a good network of tracks and other line features suitable for use in setting easy and moderate courses.

Concept courses

Even though course planning computer software such as Condes makes a course-setter's life a lot easier, there's no substitute for starting your course planning by drawing up 'concept' or draft courses on black-and-white copies of the map. At this stage you can plan the overall shape of the courses and approximate distances, as well as ensuring that the courses are interesting and varied. There's even no need to select actual control sites yet. As you begin to design each 'concept' course, it's a good idea to choose a major (long) 'route choice' leg to be incorporated into the course.

First leg

When designing a course, it's particularly important to begin with one or two shorter legs, to allow competitors to 'get onto the map'. You need to remember that some competitors may have limited experience in navigating the type of terrain that you are using, and may not have used the map before. It can be demoralising for a competitor to have to locate the first control when it's located at the other side of the map.

Fairness

In Orienteering it's important that there are no elements of unfairness built into the courses. A course could be considered unfair if it introduces an element of luck. A course-setter can unwittingly introduce this element in the way he/she places controls. In this respect it's important to remember some basic rules:

1. There should be a clear 'attack point' located a short distance before each control. An attack point is an easily-recognisable feature that is both clear on the map and on the ground.

2. For moderate courses, it is critical to have a 'catching feature' (such as a track or fence) located a short distance beyond any control that requires 'cross-country' navigation from the previous control.

3. It's best to avoid placing controls in or beyond thick vegetation. Such locations create 'bingo' controls and some competitors could be unfairly disadvantaged by having to search for these 'hidden' controls.

4. It's vital that the course-setter visits and tapes all control sites before finalising each course.

Variety

A course-setter should use some creative flair. It's important that a course-setter uses some imagination when developing concept courses. For example, try to incorporate the following features into your courses:

A variety of control types. In uncomplicated gully/spur terrain for example it is permissible to use gullies *and* spurs as control sites. Try to avoid a succession of boulders or rock faces when course-setting in Granite terrain. Granite terrain always has some interesting form features like shallow gullies.

Frequent direction changes. It keeps competitors on their toes (and interested) if they're required to enter a control and then negotiate an exit in a different direction. Try to incorporate left- and right-hand direction changes in your courses. The introduction of loops and cross-overs is a good way of achieving this objective, and this has the

added advantage of making the course more compact (meaning less time spent taping, placing and collecting controls).

A variety of leg lengths. To me the ideal

Orienteering course includes a couple of stages where a few tricky short legs are thrown in.

Dog-legs

When incorporating a direction change in a course, it's important to not get carried away and make the angle too tight – i.e. less than 90 degrees. The problem created here is that a competitor can be 'led into' a control by another competitor leaving the same control. A similar problem is a dog-leg 'between courses', meaning that a control is used on two courses and is approached from the opposite direction on the respective courses.

Route choice

When setting courses that comply with the principles of 'long distance' events, the theory goes that every leg should involve route choice. This is not always possible (or even desirable), as sometimes it's necessary to introduce a 'special purpose' leg to add variety to the course or to avoid a dog-leg. Good route choice legs are undoubtedly the crucial element of good courses. It's the classic route choices that add so much enjoyment to the sport of Orienteering. The huddles of tired bodies that gather for earnest discussion at the finish won't talk so much about *how they found* control 6 but rather *how they got to* control 6. So, whatever else you include in your courses, make absolutely sure you give route choice your number one priority.

'Gratuitous' climbing

An important aspect of good course-setting is to avoid legs with 'gratuitous' climbing (in other words, where the leg provides no choice other than a gruelling uphill route to the control). There should always be a choice between climbing to a control (via a direct route) and reaching the control by a flatter (more circuitous) route.

Control descriptions

As our sport becomes more technical, competitors are coming to expect a high degree of accuracy when it comes to control descriptions. You need to be aware of the technical requirements in this important area. When choosing a control site it becomes important to avoid sites that will be difficult to describe. Point features such as boulders, rock faces and pits make excellent control sites, but can only be used when they are sufficiently isolated. You'll save yourself a lot of time out in the field by avoiding highly complex areas when choosing control sites.

Granite terrain

Granite terrain presents its own special challenges to a course-setter. Consider, for example:

Granite maps contain large areas of complex rock detail, and typically have fewer tracks and less contour definition than other types of Orienteering maps. This presents a problem when setting easy and moderate courses, as these courses normally rely on a good network of tracks and other line features, coupled with a range of easy-to-find control locations. One way of overcoming this problem is to make use of large, well-defined gullies as line features. When using a gully as a line feature on easy and moderate courses, make sure to break the gully up by placing controls at short intervals at obvious features along the gully.

Granite maps present a course-setter with a vast array of excellent control sites. However, not all of these potential sites will be useable. Even on the best granite maps (and we are fortunate to have several of these in Victoria alone) rock point features are not always as clear as the map may indicate, particularly when located in an area where a lot of rock detail is mapped. This means that the course-setter must visit each site, carefully (and honestly) assessing its suitability before making a final choice. A lot of time can be saved if, at the course planning stage, the course-setter avoids using certain types of features, for example:

A boulder, where there are a number of boulders and similar rock features that will be included in (or adjacent to) the control circle.

A boulder cluster, unless it is separate and clearly defined on the map (and on the ground when visited).

A rock feature that is in the middle (or on the far side) of thicker vegetation.

A final word

I would argue that all budding course-setters should ideally begin their involvement in the course-setting process as an understudy to one of the more experienced members of the club, who could subsequently continue in a mentoring capacity where required. I, for one would be happy to offer assistance to anyone wishing to have a first attempt at course-setting.

Ankle protection in orienteering – Prue Dobbin

Disappointingly, there's been a spate of sprained ankles at orienteering events lately. Rough ground is one of the hazards of the sport and an ankle injury one of the risks. And nothing is more

annoying than an ankle sprain as it is painful and can stop you training and competing for weeks. So how do orienteers manage this risk?

Well, some people have super strong ankles (they work on this) and need no support, while other find low rise (flat) orienteering shoes help reduce the risk. Some people tape their ankles prior to any trip out in the bush. Others wear mid height hiking boots and walk.

I started orienteering many years ago, but gave up due to multiple ankle injuries (around 9 injuries over time, I think). I found these injuries frustrating as I loved being in the bush. I tried taping for a while, but found I had an allergy to the tape.

Then I discovered ankle braces. These things have revolutionised my life! With them, I can run across any sort of terrain without even thinking about my ankles. Occasionally I might slightly tweak an ankle, reminding me it's there, but never enough to do an injury. Ankle braces are an essential part of my kit and I use them at every event – both bush events and also sprint events where there might be rough ground or stairs.



There are several similar brands of ankle brace available and other club members wear these brands. If you see someone wearing ankle braces, you might like to ask what they think of them and where they got them.

I get my Futura Ankle Stabilizers at pharmacies (sometimes they are on the shelf and sometimes they have to be ordered) and you can also get them online. They are sold individually, so you have to buy two. They cost around \$67 to \$90 each, depending where you buy them.

Information about Futuro Ankle Stabilizers can be found here-

https://www.futuro.3m.com.au/3M/en_AU/p/d/v100558151/

Stockists can be found here -

https://www.futuro.3m.com.au/3M/en_AU/futuro-au/products/Where-to-Buy/

Any pharmacy that stocks Futuro brand should be able to help. I always look out for these ankle braces – and recently found some on the shelf at the Amcal Chemist in Shepparton, so quickly snapped them up.

New members



Prue giving belated ankle advice to Micah

The ankle braces I use are Futuro Ankle Performance Stabilizer. They are really easy to put on over your socks, are super comfortable and last for years.



Jarred and Staci with Mabel at Lockwood