

DOUBLE HEADER WEEKEND IN AUGUST.

On Sunday 12 August DOC are running the first ever Otago Short O Champs. These will be a traditional 2 race, chasing start format, not the wussy one race format that many clubs nowadays seem to prefer. On the day before the Short O will be another first.

The Otago Adventure O Champs.

This will be an event not for the fainthearted. Stream crossings, steep climbs, mud, steep descents with the aid of a rope, cryptic controls and all sorts of exciting things will be the order of the day all on our most notorious town map Ross Creek.

Start times will be from 10am to 1pm. The earlier start times are because of the Rugby test that afternoon which starts at 2:35pm.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS.

Margaret Tagg.

It happened AGAIN! After the disappointment of the postponement of the Otago Champs weekend it was frustrating to look out the window early on the day of the scheduled June 10 Gladbrook event two weeks later and realize that this time we weren't even going to get out of Dunedin, or for many of us out of our driveways. The courses Bob and Judy had worked hard to plan will no doubt be used at a later date and but we must acknowledge the time they had spent and the disappointment they experienced.

Committee members met on May 30 to reschedule the Champs event postponed on May 25. Bruce and Richard had requested that the May 26 Matarae event be held next year so we will be able to enjoy their event then. Consideration was given to all suggestions Club members had made and thank you for those. The choice of Sunday June 17 avoided clashes with University exams and Southland events and alteration to the Schools league schedule, and suited Bunny, Planner and Barrie, Controller. Some orienteers have sad stories as to why the new date didn't suit and I am one of those. However people who did compete had a great time and special thanks go to everyone who made the day a success, especially Bunny and Barrie. A prizegiving to present trophies and certificates will be held at the Short O Champs at Allans Beach on 12 August, that is provided we survive the Adventure O Champs at Ross Creek on 11 August !!

You will have read in the May DOCument that at the AGM of the NZOF at Easter it was voted to make changes from August 1 to the way NZOF is funded. Our Committee

has decided not to make any change to event fees for the balance of this year even though our levy to NZOF has increased. Club members are busy preparing more events. One weekend I suggest people think about is the Ski O at Waiorau Snow Farm on July 28-29. It is not even necessary to have cross-country skied before and this is one time we can hope for lots of snow to experience all that Julie and Fran are planning.

Happy Orienteering.

REPORT ON CONTROLLERS CLINIC JUNE 9-10

Jane Forsyth

I was in Wellington around this time and managed to get along to this NZOF course, which was run by Ken Holst (an internationally accredited controller) and Michael Wood of the NZOF technical committee. Although I have never controlled a course and not planned very many, it was really worthwhile and I learned heaps.

The controller for an O event is often a more experienced orienteer than the planner/course setter, and the controller is there to represent the competitors, as it were. Controllers ensure that mistakes are avoided, rules are followed, fairness is paramount and the safety of competitors is considered. So all aspects of course planning, from the accuracy of the map, through the length and difficulty of the courses, to the precise placement of the controls, are covered. Also within the controller's area of concern are avoiding or lessening hazards; dealing with complaints, disqualifications and missing people on the day, and even cancelling the event because of extreme conditions. The buck stops at the controller.

For large events such as national or international ones, there are extra layers of organisation - TV cameras! Drug testing!! - and there may need to be an overall controller for multi-day events. I felt pleased that I won't have to deal with such things for a local club event and grateful to those people who do take on such major organisational, technical and logistic challenges as the Nationals and World Masters. Of course the controller does not have to actually do everything, but to ensure that the necessary duties are done by someone. So the whole team of people involved in an event may be coordinated by the controller, although we don't always do it this way at club events. It also follows that controllers have to be aware of the NZOF rules, which are intended to make events safe, fair to everyone, and of a suitable standard.

A fun exercise on the Mt Victoria map, rather like our Town Belt , had us visiting a set of controls and noting what was wrong with them - wrong control code, wrong feature, hidden inside a bush or behind a tree, too far from the feature, on a dangerous feature, control description didn't properly describe the site etc. I think one control had 5 different things wrong with it. Good to be aware of what can go wrong.

Although it was not the main point of the controllers clinic, we did touch briefly on principles of course planning. Both planners and controllers should know these inside out. I hope that within the next year, DOC will be running a course for planners and controllers, and I encourage you to come along whether or not you've already planned or controlled events. It's really interesting and adds another dimension to your orienteering. Watch this space.

RED/ORANGE COACHING, MAY 2001.

Jane Forsyth

A small but keen group spent a Saturday in May with Ray Pratt, the coach of the Peninsula and Plains O Club in Christchurch

Ray's opening remarks were about champions - these are the people who do the basics better than anyone else. Although we may not all aspire to be champions, we all do better if we master the basics and apply them consistently. We can make improvements by identifying our repeated mistakes and working on the biggest ones first.

You may recall in an earlier issue of DOCUMENT I passed on the idea that "Champions have good days and days when they learn something new". The question I asked was how do we actually learn? One plan is to write these lessons in a book (or on the back of you map - but how often do you read them there?) and pick off the largest ones to reduce or eliminate.

The 3-legged stool analogy, which many will have heard before, is still a very useful one. The Physical, Mental (or Emotional) and Technical aspects have to be in balance or else the stool (Performance) will fall over.. So you could try looking at things you're not satisfied with in your O and dividing them into into one of these 3 categories. Then work out which few, or one, are losing you the most time on courses. For example, perhaps you are supremely fit but keep running off the map (fitness is fine but work is needed on navigation). Or perhaps you get hyped up at the start of big events and your technical skills go out the window (calming and focussing techniques can be learned). The other analogy was the electrician's tool belt. The trick is to select the right tools or combinations of tools for each leg of the course.

We discussed some physiological facts and fitness training programmes. Then we looked at map folding and the benefits of doing this accurately and carefully. And finally we discussed route choices on the map from the national championships, analysing which techniques we would use on each leg.

In the afternoon we did 2 types of exercises at Waikouaiti. First walking a fairly open part of the map, discussing what we saw on the ground, and how this was interpreted on the map. Sometimes you can do this on the way to the start of your course, to get your mind attuned to the map. Then into the pine forest for

some bearing and distance exercises where we had no map as such but just a course and some north lines. We had to follow the course using only accurate bearings and distance estimation (eg pace counting). By then it was pretty dark under the trees and we called it a day.

Next day was the Narrowdale event and Ray was on hand to discuss route choices with us after the run. Those who took part in this found it a worthwhile exercise. I was really happy to see that one of the "students" from the day before had gained the confidence to do a red course and managed it well with the skills we'd been practising. I personally made some stuff-ups but at least I now have a book to write them in!

OTAGO CHAMPS - MT ROSS - PLANNER'S REPORT.

Bunny Rathbone.

It was debatable whether the Otago Champs would actually eventuate this year with the vagaries of the weather taking charge of that decision. Due to be held on the 26th May in conjunction with Matarae on the 27th May they were eventually postponed until the 17th June. The change meant that a number of competitors were not able to attend on that day and had to forfeit their run but for others who had previously not entered it became a second chance to compete. The Matarae event was postponed indefinitely as was the Gladbrook event on the 10th June which also suffered from adverse weather conditions.

Winter certainly arrived with a vengeance on the 26th May, snow closing the road between Outram and Middlemarch and once again snow falling down to 300 metres. One of the problems caused by snow and ice is the safety of competitors on the road and the consequences of starting later in the day making the end of the day run into low light conditions and an early start for the night. An impossible situation for collecting in controls.

For their devotion to duty I would especially like to thank the following. Jennifer Hudson needs to be praised for her total commitment to communicating with prompt emails to competitors about subsequent changes. She was inundated by phone calls and managed to stay calm and focused throughout. Barrie Foote who not only controlled the event but drew all the maps using OCAD and arranged the printing of same! As he is not meant to do any running which is detrimental to his knee injury he did control placement and checking and water bottle carrying using his trusty mountain bike - a quick way of getting around the course. Barrie's car broke down at the Lee Stream bridge on the Friday afternoon, 25 May, as he was trying to join me to bag maps. After searching and discovering that evening that he was not actually out on the map area and finally speaking to him on the phone I went back to Dunedin to retrieve him. That night we had dinner at 11 p.m. and finished bagging maps at 2 a.m. The car has since been repaired.

Lindsay and Ev Smith, the original organisers of the event, who put chains on their car and got through the snow along with Gavin Craw towing the Club trailer. It was a select few who decided to stay at Middlemarch that night, Lindsay and Ev who had booked the Sutton Camp for accommodation, Richard English and Val Rogers who volunteered to help on the Sunday if the event was still on and myself - no show without Punch! However the snow came back again, although it left Mt Ross clear so Lindsay and Ev had their runs. Conditions by the way were the same as for the previous day and on the 17th June, cold, no rain but some wind.

Ian and Jill Bagley, landowners extraordinaire, who made their comfortable cottage available to us, gave us the use of their phone and were very tolerant about our leaving our flags and stakes out all over the property for so long. We think they have trained their sheep and cattle to leave well alone as nothing was stomped on.

As you are probably all aware a stalwart band of PAPO competitors and others arrived by way of Macraes to start their courses to be met by brilliant Middlemarch sunshine and a cancelled event. They had their run and went off home happy.

Just to remind us that we shouldn't be complacent, Annie and Allan Grant had a freak accident with a stone being thrown up from the caravan which they were towing on the 17th June which shattered the back window of their car. No one was hurt but Allan had to deal with all the glass.

Who would have thought that the controls left out for 3 weeks were still relatively intact. Some flags had blown away, others had fallen down to the bottom of the stakes but most were standing even though on a decided lean.

It seems a miracle that the event actually took place. Lots of cheerful assistance was given by Club members and we had a fine though cloudy day at Mt Ross with plenty of satisfied customers who ran around the rocks happily finding their controls. We were pleased to welcome the Renwicks of Middlemarch who helped bring in the Gladbrook controls from the week before. Most interesting courses this time given the nature of the land and the convenience of the fences, tracks and narrow marshes were courses 8 & 9. Tell us how you found the event and thank you all for supporting it.

PLANNER'S REPORT - GLADBROOK.

Judy Wilson.

Planner's report? You might well say "But I thought that event was cancelled" . Yes it was, but still there was lots of planning going on. Seven trips to Middlemarch for this planner and 2 for the controller is quite a lot of effort for a non event. So it is worth a report. Six courses were planned with the long

red being 10.5 km. This is an area which has been used again and again and planned by me many times but still the magic beauty never fails to enthrall. The field trip planning was undertaken during the drought and the ground was concrete hard with your feet crunching over the very dry grass. One of the new farm owners was worried about our members dropping cigarette butts and setting fire to the area. He was quite right to be concerned but at the same time it conjured up a picture of our competitors taking time out behind a rock for a quick drag. The salt lake was completely dry and firm to walk across so a control, which was designed to provide some route choice round the lake, in fact could be run in a direct line across the lake.

On the Saturday before the scheduled event, Bob Cunninghame and I put out the last of the control stakes, flags and tape. It was almost unpleasantly warm with a strong nor-wester blowing. Well the rest is history with the event being cancelled on THAT Sunday. At least with consistent snow all day, the decision to cancel was clear.

I was cheerfully informed that our event was no longer needed so then it all had to be dismantled. I was lucky enough to have some friends eager for a walk who carried the stakes while I walked ahead indicating where they were. The Renwick family from Middlemarch had previously removed the stakes and flags which could be seen from the track. Thank you for this.

Thank you to the Davies family too, who were poised and ready to go as organisers.

Just in case you are interested - the start and finish was going to be in the DOC area. Maybe we'll have better luck with this venue next year.

PYRAMIDS- PLANNER'S & CONTROLLER'S REPORT

Jane Forsyth & Myles Thayer

Myles did more the half the work for this event when it turned out that Jane had to be out of town for some of the time that would normally be used for planning. Also we found that the map was still not complete after the partial revision by Marcus Pinker last December. So the Pyramids event was really a joint effort between Myles, Jane and Barrie Foote who worked up to the last minute making the map as good as it could be. The other people who made the event happen were Bob and Jason Clearwater, who cheerfully shifted stock and switched off electric fences for us. Bob also moved the bull out of the competition area at our request, which was particularly appreciated.

We put the controls out the day before the event - a fine sunny winter's day. We put out about half the controls each and then checked each other's controls. By the morning of the event a strong wind had got up and a few control flags had gone sailing off, as Myles discovered when he went out to put water on the courses. The other early morning check was to make sure the cattle had not knocked over any of the controls as they sometimes do.

The setting up generally went ok except when Jane found she had left the white course master maps at home. Fortunately home was only 10 minutes drive away, not all the way in to Dunedin. It is amazing that however early you arrive for setting up an event, there always seems to be a last-minute rush of some sort.

People seemed to enjoy the courses - thanks to those who took the time to make comments on the course length and design. By the next time you run at Pyramids, I hope the rest of the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust area (to the east of the farmed land) will be completely mapped and we can make more use of it for the red courses. As the map is not yet finished, anyone who has ideas to improve it should note these down and they can be actioned. I know there was some debate about the use of green striping over white to denote areas of thick bracken, and some small areas of white that perhaps should not be there.

Our thanks to Don Melville and all who helped at the Start/Finish and to the helpers who volunteered to collect controls - Pam Thayer, Jim Cotter, Don Bruce and the Cambridge family. And also to Ian Holden and George McLeod who spent a while mending fences for Bob Clearwater, which was much appreciated.

NEWS FROM OTHER CLUB/S.

PAPO: Has a Road Safety Plan for describing events, improving onsite locality marking and by opening or manning access gates from the highway as appropriate. Have chosen a design for new O suits. Membership of 220.

MOC: The RNZAF still refuse to talk sense on map royalty after years of using some MOC maps free of charge.