

Bush orienteering committee – report to October Council meeting

It has been a successful year for bush orienteering in Victoria. The undoubted highlight was the Oceania Carnival with its outstanding event production. On a slightly less glamorous stage, though, a good set of State Series events was held. Several events achieved attendances in the 180-190 range, the best that we have seen on a consistent basis (apart from events with significant interstate attendance) for at least a decade. Event standards have also been generally good, with some issues of low/moderate significance but nothing which warranted a course cancellation.

Some issues to note include the following:

Easter 2013: We will need to start moving on this event quite quickly – we have an in-principle decision to stage Easter itself around Bendigo but will need to confirm this, as well as the structure of post-Easter carnival events (if any). We will also need to confirm the extent to which Bendigo wish to take on parts of Easter themselves and the extent to which it will be a broader VOA event.

General fixtures in 2012 and beyond: A decision will be needed on the 2012 fixture, in particular on the Victorian Long and Middle Championships (at the time of writing there are bids for the former from both BK and YV, although the BK bid may be deferred to 2013). In general the overall structure of the fixture from 2011 looks sound (in particular the BK 3-day weekend in May was a success and we would hope to repeat it), although we would want to ensure a State Series-level event at least every few weeks, which means we need an event or two to fill gaps in July and August.

Looking further ahead, we have or will have a number of new or near-new maps in NE Victoria whose future use we need to plan with some care. In the longer term I can see us having a State-level weekend there at least every second year; Rowdy Flat/Kangaroo Crossing would seem well-suited to an NOL weekend (possibly WOC trials) in 2014.

Mapped areas: There is a continued need to identify suitable near-Melbourne bush areas (even small ones) to support the Melbourne bush series, as well as to identify areas which might support OA-funded participation projects (particularly in Gippsland). There is also a continued need to develop and maintain a database of mapped areas and their use.

Event rules: In general no radical changes appear necessary to rules at State Series level (in particular the course/class structure seems to be working well at present). There are some aspects of the Victorian Championships rules which may have been superseded and a review should take place in the next few months. There is also a need for a policy on suitable areas for Victorian Championships (e.g. how long areas should have been rested for before being remapped for an event at that level).

Controllers: A controllers course is being run on 27 November (thanks to Kathy Liley). The number of controllers has kept pace with demand over the last couple of years but more are always needed, especially as our volunteer base is ageing. We will also need to draw on our pool of high-level (Level 3) controllers for the 2013 carnival.

Blair Trewin
16 October 2011