

## Short Bush O Report

October is now fixture deadline month. Permit applications need to be made soon for events leading up to Easter. Permits also seem to require more detail than in the past. This means there hasn't been much time for thinking strategically.

The fixture looks reasonably healthy with regard to Bush-O fixtures. At this stage there are 52 or 53 bush events. The balance is as follows-

- Championships- 2
- State Series – 6
- Vic Bush- 3
- Mel Bush - 7
- Bendigo Series – 32-34 (still in flux)

One issue yet to be resolved is the question of joint or split applications to Parks Vic. One view is that there should be a single application. The feeling in Bendigo is that they want to keep their fixture permits separate based on this year's experience. Sorting out the permits took 80 emails, and the club feels its needs to minimise the relaying of information.

Some observations-

The worlds of park and bush are converging in Melbourne. It's getting harder to pick whether an event is park or bush. This year it was the State Relay, Next year it is the Relay and one or two SS events.

The approach of Melbourne and Bendigo is diverging. Melbourne seems to be shifting more towards urban orienteering within the "bush" framework. Braeside Park (I assume) and the Relays at Darebin are examples. Ruth is using the Vic Bush series to smooth out the bumps in event availability in an unofficial extension of the MelBush Series. Meanwhile, Bendigo is stretching the boundaries the other way by running a number of sprint events in mining terrain. Its also introducing two new bush maps into its local event series, one gold mining and one spur gully. This builds on the two new bush maps last year. The differences between the two cities are made starker if you look at the split of reasonably technically demanding bush events in next years fixture- 28 of 36 are in the Bendigo fixture.

It seems to me these trends are driven by the power of proximity and the desire to reduce organiser burden. I expect they will accelerate as the composition of participants ages. I wonder at the future use of a number of maps in the Daylesford and Castlemaine area. Will clubs find it worthwhile to invest in updating these maps?