

FOREST



understories

ISSUE **4**
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Jackson's MTBO
double
page 1

Victorian Relays
2005
page 2

Aus Champs
photo gallery
page 3

Melbourne
Marathon
page 4

New O Terrain
discovered
page 5

Adventure
racing
page 6

Yarra bend
relays
page 7



photo: Peter Jackson

Jackson's MTBO double

Adrain and Carolyn Jackson have taken out a memorable double the 2005 National Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships both winning the long open

classes.

Adrain also went on to become the middle distance champion. Good races from the two other Jackson Men - Peter 2nd in M50 middle distance and Timmy 1st in M14

CLUB NEWS

Christmas Party!

Monday 19th December at the Dalheim's, 12 Thames St Northcote at 7pm. BYO meat/vegies for the BBQ, and something to share (salad, dessert etc). Bring along a Xmas gift for the pot luck Kris Kringle. Also your last chance to put in a good showing for the MFR AGM awards, like best dessert chef (although the competition may have been sewn up by last night's debutantes Rob and Anna for their awesome dessert spread, thanks guys!)

Satopek

Rune Olsen has confirmed his position as the fastest MFR runner with a win in the annual Satopek 10km B division race held earlier this month in a time of 32 minutes 54 seconds. Rune was happy with his run but unable to repeat his PB time of 31.47 set somewhere in Denmark last year.

AGM

MFR's AGM for 2006 will be held at the Orienteering season opener in February (details to follow). Nominations now being taken for committee positions and annual awards (see Bruce).

Liggo chariman

Paul 'Liggo' Liggins has been appointed as the National Chairman of selectors for orienteering Australia. Can i just say what a fine choice they made in selecting you, Liggo; your wit, charm and striking handsomeness will be a valuable asset to the organisation!

Jackson MTBO win

middle distance - made for a tremendously successful campaign by the Jackson Family.

Adrian's win topped off a great year after another medal at the world champs in September and a 3rd spot in the world rankings.

Tim Jackson in full stride approaching the finish line (right)



Victorian Relays 2005

Pictures by Dion Keech



MFR has again dominated proceedings at the 2005 Victorian relays. Forest Racer teams were in the top three placings for various categories.



A good relay transition between Morten Neve and Torgeir (above), Dion 'Neon' Keech showing his form in the finish chute (right) and the starting line up (below)



Aus Champs photo gallery

Photos by Dion keech.
Clockwise from top left:

Careful adjustment of the 'boys' is all part of Warren's pre race preparations.



Kerry White pointing to one of her many dark green route choices with soot covering her head to toe to prove it. She got all the controls in her epic 3.5 hour W35 course but unfortunately recorded a DNF due to the SI boxes automatically turning off.



Robert Molnar running through the spectator control put in some good performances at the champs ahead of returning to his home in Europe this month



Bruce arthur sprinting to the finish on day one



Kirsten fairfax was showing good comeback form at the Aus Champs; here she is seen coming into the spectator control for the relay



Blair Trewin sets off in the relay



Melbourne Marathon 2005

Bruce Arthur
reports on his first
Marathon



Bruce Arthur in full stride



Bruce and Blair smiling
through the pain after the
finish

I had to run one eventually. I've lost count of how many people have asked me if I have run a marathon, and the timing this year didn't clash with any of my orienteering races, so I entered less than 2 weeks out from the race. I must say that I did no marathon specific training, my long runs in the past 6 months were all orienteering races, with the exception of the Burnley half marathon. So I was a little unsure how this would translate into a debut marathon.

It's a tradition in international orienteering races that the bus driver always gets lost on the way from to the start. I didn't think this would be possible from Melbourne to Frankston, but somehow the driver managed it. Once we eventually go there, the next challenge was to stay warm until the start. There were blusterly west winds and freezing showers passing by. The toilet queue facing east was longer, but much more popular because at it was not facing the rain. I think part of the reason that the queues were so long because the cubicles were the warmest places in Frankston.

After some motivational words from Deek, we were off at 8am. Wayne, Blair and I started about 10 rows back and set ourselves for 4m/km pace. We couldn't find Mitho, but figured we'd meet up with him somewhere in the first few kms. The first km was a bit crowded, but none of us were going to panick - it was more important not to go out too hard. We were in front of Mona for 2 or 3 minutes. He was obviously not racing, but just pacing for some of his mates.

Wayne, Blair and I settled into 4m/km pace quite well. After 5km we had a pack of about 10, but there was a gap of 30 seconds to another group in front. That group came back to us soon and from about 8km there was a nice pack of around 20. Everything was comfortable and there was even time for a bit of a chat. I took my first gel at 10km and everything was on track.

From 10-15km we turned a little more NW and started to notice the wind more. It was mostly from the side, but was stong enough to push you around a little. Sitting in the pack seemed like the best idea at this time. Blair got a little excited at found himself 100m in front on his own for the next 40 minutes, which probably hurt him at the end of the day. Mitho, Wayne and I were around the front of the pack trying to keep the pace on target.

There was a stiff headwind from Mordialloc to Beaumaris. The pace dropped by a few seconds per km, but the pack was the place to be. Blair was still in front putting in a lot of effort, but coming back towards us. Wayne was around but I didn't see much of him. Mitho was near me towards the front of the pack, and I took my second gel at 20km.

By the half way mark Mitho and I caught Blair, and the pack was thinning. Until Brighton, the wind was mostly from the side and it felt easier. Mitho and I kept up the pace with one other, and we pulled away from the group. After leaving Brighton, the first 2 women were in sight and we were gaining on them. At 26km I started to feel the first signs of any discomfort. The quads were tiring a little, but did not affect my pace. I think this was about the last time that I saw Mitho. At 30km I had caught the leading female, said hi to Max at the drink station, and took my last gel.

At this stage everything was fine. Muscles were starting to hurt a bit, but it wasn't that hard. What is all this marathon fuss about? I stayed with the leading female until 35km. We were still running just over 4m/km and were getting lots of cheers from the increasing number of spectators. Unfortunately most of them were shouting for her and not me!

By Fitzroy St, St Kilda I couldn't sustain the 4m/km pace anymore. Not even Nathan Buckley's cheer was enough (although he probably got excited when he saw Mitho's Collingwood singlet). Mentally I wanted to keep the pace up, but the muscles started cramping and I had to drop back by 15-20 seconds/km. By St Kilda Rd I was on my own for the first time. Everything was hurting, but it was now only about 1 lap of the Tan to go, so I just had to hold on. At 39km a blister broke on my toe, and every step hurt. But by 40km sore muscles had taken my mind off this. Sure it hurt, but it was really quite easy compared to the end of most orienteering races. The were no big hills, undergrowth or logs to negotiate so it was simply a matter of keep putting one foot in front of the other.

By 41km it was easy. I could see the crowds, and Anne, Mason and Torren on the side of the road cheering for me. I even passed Mona - his mate had stopped to a walk by this stage. It was a great feeling to cross the line - 2hr52m15s. I'd achieved my target time in my debut marathon, in pretty tough conditions.

Blair was not far behind in 2hr52m59s, and Wayne and Mitho were in the 2hr54s. A great effort from all.

Walking back to the car was probably harder than any km of the race. I think it may take me a few days to comfortably walk down the stairs at home. However, the pain was worth it and I'm glad I've now completed a marathon.

New orienteering territory explored!

Words and pictures by Susannah King



South Yarra member, Susannah King, was sent by the MFR President on a secret exploratory mission in October in search of potential new orienteering terrain for MFR's mapping program in 2006. An undercover investigation by Forest Understories has also discovered that the MFR treasurer authorised Susannah to offer as large a transfer fee as required to try and lure Western Nomad runner Karen Staudte, who has been in hiding in Michigan USA on a 4 month training camp, to return to her home town and run for MFR in 2006. Sideline objectives of her mission were to give George W. Bush a piece of her mind in Washington DC, and to present 3 papers at a conference in Baltimore. Following this exposé, FU was able to gain an exclusive interview with Susannah, to find out how successful her mission was.

FU: Tell us about how you kept secret about the O terrain and recruitment mission?

SK: Well, my current cover allows me to pose as a PhD student at Monash University, undertaking research which I can then submit for presentation at international conferences each year; which provides a useful excuse for travel to explore hitherto unknown corners of the world for potential MFR maps. I can then conveniently slip out of the country a few days in advance, using the guise of "Getting over jet lag" as a reason for having those few extra days. Despite the best efforts of American Airlines to jeopardise the mission by leaving us on the tarmac in Chicago, while my plane to Michigan was about to depart, I managed to bribe the airtraffic controllers (you're allowed to turn your phone on as soon as you land in the USA) into allowing us to park the plane so I could push my way off and sprint through O'Hare airport (Monday night run's training paying off) to my connecting flight to Grand Rapids Michigan.

FU: I heard that wasn't the only way that American Airlines tried to delay the mission?

SK: That's right, I think that they must be in league with Bayside Kangaroos who are trying to stop us from securing any new high quality areas for mapping. Having failed to stop me getting to Grand Rapids, they failed to send my luggage on until midday Saturday, so I had no clothes or shoes with me other than what I was wearing. Fortunately the Grand Rapids shopping malls stay open late on Friday, so I simply went shopping for new running shoes, within an hour of arrival.

FU: So tell us about the O terrain you found.

SK: Pittwater Dunes, Cantara and Woodhill eat your heart out! Michigan's west coast (that's the Great Lakes coast line, not the ocean) has the most awesome looking sand dune O terrain I've seen. Rolling forested dunes, with minimal undergrowth, but enough to hold the sand down for easy running. Mostly "white" areas for good running. With a few light green areas. Good track network. Open bowl areas like Cantara. Little lakes everywhere in the more northern areas. And, given it was autumn ("fall" to the locals); the most magnificent display of autumn colours in the trees.

FU: I hear it gets pretty cold in winter in Michigan. Can we run Ski-O there?

SK: The northern parts of Michigan have cross-country ski trails everywhere, so yes, we could use the areas for Ski-O as well.

FU: So how come the local clubs haven't snapped up these areas for mapping?

SK: What local clubs? They're all into huntin' and fishin' there. We also saw salmon swimming upstream to spawn.

FU: Anything else to recommend this area for training?

SK: We found a great sand dune for hill intervals – 140m high (see picture). Only thing it, you might only get a few intervals in during a session – 1 minute to run down, 10-15 minutes to climb back up again!

FU: OK, then part 1 of the mission successful, part 2 needs further work. How about finding George W. in Washington DC?

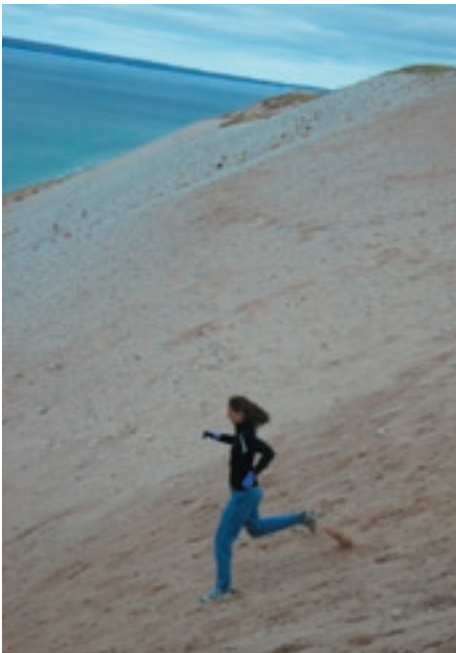
SK: I spent three days searching high and low in Washington DC but did not see him. I can report that he doesn't hang out in any of the main tourist attractions (outside Capital Hill, in the Smithsonian museums or the Holocaust museum, he doesn't go and admire past presidents at their memorials; nor pay his respects to fallen soldiers at the various war memorials. Laura doesn't shop at the Wholefoods supermarket, nor the Pentagon City Shopping mall. He's not interested in the giant pandas at the zoo; nor is he dining in the best Spanish restaurant I've eaten in outside Spain. And, despite the beautiful weather in DC in October, he doesn't sunbake on the front lawn of the White House. But...I had great fun looking around.

FU: Any other discoveries in Washington DC?

SK: Yes, I've figured out what must be missing when we get tired during an O race, and start making mistakes – we need "Brain Respiration" from the Yoga studio in downtown DC (see picture).

FU: Thanks for the exclusive, where is your next MFR exploratory mission?

SK: Now that would be telling, although I'm currently in negotiations with the MFR treasurer about funding for a sneak look at WOC in Denmark in June 2006: there is a convenient cover of another conference there. Only problem is likely competition from another MFR secret agent, who can probably get better access to all areas than I can!



A full day....

Adventure racing, Michigan winter style – not as warm as the one in Lorne on the same weekend. Karen Staudte reports from the frozen lands

December 3, 2005.

Get up at 4 30 am. Eat pasta for breakfast. Finish loading car, try to get it to start (5 mins) then get it out of “park”- 5 minutes and two phone calls- I forgot automatics won’t shift unless you step on the brake. Head on up the icy road following Matt, who drives too fast, wondering what sort of day I’m in for. By the look of the pace Matt is setting in the car, a tough one. He’s not going to be an easy one to draft off.

Register for the race at 6 am. Picture a lot of foot stamping and finger scrunchy, temperature is -4 C and here I am, in a parkland pavilion, signing up for an adventure race. The waiver seems even more ridiculous than normal. Fingers can barely hold the pen. Forecast was perfect- apparently- no wind, -2, clearish skies. Better than a blizzard, windy, -8 (although the option of going home would have been there...)

Spend an hour rearranging gear in the car- how many mittens in which bag, how many changes of clothes etc. Our plan for the day was... orienteering (4 controls), MTB for about an hour, o again for 5 controls, MTB for another 60 minutes, orienteering (4 controls), ride for 45 minutes, paddle down a river for almost 2 hours, flying fox across the river, then another 8 controls to finish. 4 maps into one map case, with the one you wanted to look at never being uppermost!

Things to consider- and learn about adventure racing in the cold- firstly, everything in your hydration system/camel back will freeze!! Especially in the line- so you have to blow air back into the line to clear it after every drink! Secondly, you wouldn’t dream of taking your gear off to change into something dry- its too cold and too hard to do that. Thirdly, icy roads are not very soft landing surfaces when cycling! I have one sore hip!!! Snow makes great tracking for navigating, and as usual, the maps are not quite OA standard but they do, at a pinch. Frozen Powerbars are tooth-breakers- Snickers work better—but still pretty tough.

The snow-covered ground is ok, expect for the bits that are snow covered ice with water underneath them. Its worth going around little streams as they may actually be chest deep in water! The ice makes cool crackling noises when you push on it with your paddle...The logs and stumps in the river are readily identified by the little piles of snow on top of them...Seagulls can walk on water here, cause its actually iced over...Warm fires are fabulous things whilst people put harnesses on you before and after you do flying foxes...canoes that you hire here are as hard to steer as canoes anywhere else in the world and a great source of bickering between team mates! Matt and I were a bad match-I was too weak on the bike by far, luckily I could pick up a lot of time on the orienteering...but I think we finished 6th in the mixed section overall.

The most powerful vision I have though (probably cause I watched it for almost two hours) was watching the icicles form on Matt’s helmet and flotation vest as we paddled down the river. The best one was only about 4 cm long, but even so!! Every little splash from the paddle trickles down the vest and freezes...a real change from watching sweat bead on sweat-glistening sunscreen-covered shoulders back home!! Oh- steering is the same- instead of slipping on sunscreen-sweaty hands, it’s the icicles between the paddle and your gloves that break the grip!!

When it was all over and I’d eaten lots of hot chilli and chicken soup and stood in front of a warm fire for about an hour I was pretty content. Changing the flat tyre in the snow and dark at 6 pm on the way home was lousy, looking everywhere for the keys afterwards including unpacking the car several times was lousy too- you know me and keys! But overall it was a great day!

I’m still waiting for things to thaw out so I can clean them completely.!

That’s enough, wish I could’ve taken pictures, but next time you are bit hot and sweaty and dehydrated on a run, think of a frozen camelback and smile!

Kerry White running up the beach in Lorne after her 1.2 km swim, the first leg of the Anaconda Adventure race held on December 4. her team mates completed an 11km terrain run, a 14 km paddle and a 15km mountain bike ride before all running together for 3km along the beach to cross the finish line. her team was 3rd in the mixed category in 3 hours 59 minutes.



Yarra Bend relays

Bruce helped turn our usual Monday night training run into an exciting relay event in Yarra bend park in Mid November with teams completing 3 loops of the courses he set.



Clockwise from top left: the picturesque view from the start area; Troy making a cameo appearance at the monday run leads Blair; sensing defeat Liggo resorted to violence as he approaches the finish area - Jasmine is having to take cover as he comes through with elbows out. This photo is currently being reviewed by the tribunal.;Torgeir had an impressive run to come from behind on this leg;



Nation basking in glow of another record hot year

UNLESS Santa brings Australia an unseasonably cold Christmas, this year will go down as the hottest since climate records began in 1910.

Climatologists at the National Climate Centre in the Bureau of Meteorology said yesterday that the average temperature from January to November this year had already beaten the previous record year, 1998.

"We're far enough ahead already that it would be extremely unlikely for us to miss out on the record," NCC climatologist Blair Trewin said.

"We'd have to have the coldest December on record to miss out and it certainly doesn't look like happening at this stage." The spike has been caused by a long-term warming trend, an "almost but not quite El Nino effect" in the tropics and an increase in averages across the country, Mr Trewin said. This year felt the mercury rise to 1C above the all-Australian average, compared with 0.5C rises in recent years.

In 1998, it was 0.83C above the all-Australian average. In the past two decades, only 2000 and 2001 have recorded an average below the all-Australian measure, Mr Trewin said. "But what's most interesting to us is that it has been warmer than average virtually everywhere in Australia this year, whereas most years it might be warm in the east and cool in the west," he said.

Hotter-than-average conditions were likely to continue next year but temperatures would be unlikely to topple this year's record, Mr Trewin said. Yesterday, temperatures climbed above 30C in Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane and Darwin. Brisbane is braced for a heatwave, with temperatures of almost 37C forecast for coming days. Queensland Health has warned the elderly and parents of the especially young to take precautions against the searing conditions to avoid heat stress. It has advised them to drink fluids, minimise physical activity and stay out of the sun between 10am and 3pm.

Maximum average temperatures in December range from a sweltering 41C at Marble Bar in Western Australia's Pilbara to a chilly 11C at the top of Mt Wellington near Hobart.

"Records always make life interesting. One of the things about this game is that something new is always happening," Mr Trewin said. Long-range weather forecaster Haydon Walker, from World Weather Enterprises, said hot conditions during this month and next month would be coupled with "good to heavy" rain in Queensland and NSW coastal districts.

2006 MFR fixtures

We have a busy year ahead for

Club relays - Fiddlers Green, Castlemaine, Easter

Sprint Championships - Melbourne University, November

State Series - Mount Tarrengower, September

MTBO State Series - Castlemaine, September

LETTERS

Sunday Morning runs are now becoming a regular fixture on the MFR training regime. after sending out an email asking for others to join me at the Studley park bridge Simon and Liggo turned up at the wrong bridge. this is the email sledging that ensued...

Just to be clear, was that the PIPE BRIDGE ? You know, the one at the Fairfield boathouse with the metal structure and the cylindrical conveyance of aqueous substances ? The one at Melways reference 30J12. At the western end of the bridge ? At 0800 (not 2000) ? I just wanted to confirm. Some people in our club aren't good with maps or directions.
liggo

Yeah, you're right Liggo, there are some people in our club who are not good with maps or directions... I mean, anyone who thinks that the pipe bridge has a 'thereabouts' relationship with studley park may as well just retire from active orienteering and take up some trivial administrative job at orienteering australia!
Dion

Yeah well, you've just blown any chance you might have had of being selected for next year's WOC team. Anyway, somebody who has such poor grammatical skills to put a preposition at the end of a sentence - and I quote "Wilsons prom is a bit far for me to ride my bike to" clearly has no attention to detail and can't be trusted in the first place. Bruce - what does the constution say about expelling members due to inappropriate behaviour and reckless disregard for seniority ?
liggo

Gee, Darn it! all my aspirations to be on the WOC team next year have been dashed. And I thought I was a shoe in! at least I can stop pretending to be your friend now that I know I'm not going to be selected. I pity all those who still have a chance to be on the team and have to actually go through the ordeal of speaking to you! apologies for my disregard of your seniority; I should know better than to talk like that to an old fart like you. However, as for my grammatical skills I do object. Do you not know that English syntax does allow for final placement of the preposition, as in We have much to be thankful for or I asked her which course she had signed up for? Efforts to rewrite such sentences to place the preposition elsewhere can have stilted and even comical results, as Winston Churchill demonstrated when he objected to the doctrine by saying "This is the sort of English up with which I cannot put."*

Sentences ending with prepositions can be found in the works of most of the great writers since the Renaissance. Stick that up your bloody grammatical jumper!

And as for expelling me I think the constitution says that the current holder of the wooden spoon award (me) cannot be expelled. Have you ever got the wooden spoon award Liggo? In fact, have you ever cooked before?
Dion

If you plan to expell Dion, will you take his place on the committee? I think you'll need to propose a motion, and then get a 2/3rds majority vote. Better start lobbying.
bruce

Shouldn't be too difficult. There is a groundswell of support for his expulsion.
liggo

As distinct from those highly regarded and sought after South Australian educational institutions. Remind me again how many European Royal Family members attended your respective high schools ?
liggo

Thereabouts is one word. Just ask Blair. However I won't be there. Or even thereabouts.
Clare.



Merry Christmas
..from all the team here at Forest Understories

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