

# BENNELONG NORTHSIDE BLUEPRINT #3

15<sup>th</sup> of September 2012

## The Word from Terry Bluett:

### **President's Report**

Our big event for the year has just finished. The NSW Long Championships at Gumble Pinnacles was a great event with a real championship course on a beautiful day. I heard many complementary comments about the event. So many thanks to Rob Spry for organising the event and to Rod Parkin for such great courses. Gumble Pinnacles has been off limits for a few years, but thanks to work by Steve Flick in convincing the new owner of the property that orienteers would respect the land and leave it as we saw it, we have now access to what I consider one of the very best areas in Australia. It is a long way away from our base in Sydney but well worth the visit every few years for major events.

The weekend was a good one with the NSW Middle Distance Championships at Kahlis Rocks on the Saturday before our event. Kahlis Rocks is also one of the best areas in Australia. The publicity about these events as Back to the Granite truly lived up to the hype. This was also a great event on a map that Bennelong owns jointly with Garingal, but in which Goldseekers have been using for local events in recent years.

Congratulations to our State Champions. Steve Flick, Wayne Pepper and Darren Slattery won both championships, middle and long, in M65A, M35AS and M21AS respectively. It is great to see Gordon Wilson recovering from his serious injury with a win in M55AS in the Long Champs. Also at the championships were a couple of previous Bennelong members. Sheralee Bailey now living in England and Judi Hay now living in Queensland were there on the weekend. It was great to see them both.

We now look forward to the summer season, but not before the Australian Championships in Tasmania. A small contingent of Bennelong members are going to Tassie, I wish you all the best in the competitions down there.

October starts the summer season with local events around the streets and parks of Sydney. These events are after work on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Bennelong's first event will start at North Harbour Reserve, Balgowlah on Wed 10<sup>th</sup> October. Pierre Francois has set a great course, I hope as many as possible will turn up on a map that stretches down to Manly Wharf and includes many other scenic parts around North Harbour.

Marina and Fedor will soon have a new baby. I'm looking forward to seeing the new addition to the family. All the best and hope to see you back on the orienteering scene again soon.

Terry Bluett

### Newsletter Structure:

1. Robert Spry on NSW Long Championships at Gumble Pinnacles
2. Kathy Cox on Wildlife at Gumble State Champs event
3. Members' answers 😊
4. Terry's NT Champ story
5. Kathy and Mel's "The Ice-O" story
6. Darren's Japanese story

## 1. Robert Spry on NSW Long Championships at Gumble Pinnacles

Last Sunday, Bennelong Northside returned to Gumble Pinnacles where we held the NSW Long Championships in 2001. In my opinion this is the most technically difficult map in Australia. It is on private property and we have been able to negotiate access with the new owner. There was some concern about the start of the access road, but with dry weather it remained passable. For those who know the area, the former Killonbutta State Forest, part of which is on the map, has been converted to a Nature Reserve.

After a windy Saturday, Sunday dawned fine and clear. Rodney and Controller Ron Junghans (Garingal) had spent the previous day and a half putting out controls. Mel, Kathy and Darren went out early, while Steve and his helpers managed the parking. There was the usual last minute rush to set up the toilets (with assistance from Garingal) and the timing computers. The main start period ran from 09:30 to 11:00, at which time the last of the Bennelong helpers were able to start.

Unfortunately there were some hiccups with the early computer downloads, requiring urgent work in the tent to correct the data files. After that, things ran fairly smoothly. Returning competitors seemed to be tired but happy to finish, commenting on the complexity of the area. The best times were really very good while less experienced runners found it very hard.

It was with great relief that we counted all competitors back in, meaning there were no injuries or requirement for searches. Soon after 1pm we were able to have the brief, low-key presentation of badge awards. After that it was time to pack it all up ! Garingal members helped to bring in controls from remote areas of the map. By 5pm the whole area was cleared and there was no sign that we had ever been there, apart for the tyre tracks.

Thanks to those who helped out on the day. Congratulations to class winners (and therefore NSW Champions) Steve Flick (M65A), Wayne Pepper (M35AS), Darren Slattery (M21AS) and Gordon Wilson (M55AS), while Terry Bluett came third in M65A.

It seemed that the day was a great success. My only regret is that I did not get to have a run. Maybe next time? **Robert Spry**



## **2. Kathy Cox on Wildlife at Gumble State Champs event**

On Sunday 9 September, our club ran the NSW State Championship on our Gumble Pinnacles map. As one of the first starters, I saw birds, kangaroos and wallabies galore. However, you didn't need to go out on a course to see them....just sitting at the Assembly area I saw two wallabies hop by.

The last finisher of the day walked in slowly holding his jersey in his arms and I thought he had hurt his forearm. Instead, he uncovered a small joey that he had found near a fence. It must have fallen from its mother's pouch. It was very young with its eyes still semi-closed and no fur yet. With Darren Slattery's help we made contact with WIRES and a family volunteered to take the little joey into Bathurst to the WIRES group for them to look after. We hope the joey is OK.

That wasn't the end of the wildlife though....Terry Bluett came back when we were packing up and said he had seen an echidna up at the start area. So Mel, Terry and I went up there to look at it. It took us a while to find it as it had move from under its log and wedged itself under the large boulder that was next to the start. We wondered how long it had been in the area and whether everyone who started had in fact run passed it during the day!



## **3. Members answers to the question:**

**"What is you're the most typical mistake in Orienteering"?**

### **Terry Bluett:**

My most common mistake is to lose concentration. This often happens when I think the next part of the course should be easy and I relax and don't make full attention to the map or the surrounds. This has led to many errors in my orienteering career.

**Gordon Wilson:**

The most common cause of my mistakes is rushing. Trying to go a little faster and not navigating enough. Nearly always ends with me losing contact with the map.

**Melvyn Cox:**

Allowing myself to be distracted by other runners.

**Rodney Parkin:**

There are so so many times I've been on track to a control and I've seen other competitors somewhere nearby and felt I had to "go over there" to check that my control wasn't there! Almost always cost me time and rarely useful. Another variant is where you are running on a line through the bush and there is another competitor running on a "not quite the same" line. It is really easy to let yourself run along the same line as the other person ... yet more often than not they are heading to a different control. Even when you KNOW they are on your course, they may just be wrong. I need to keep telling myself RUN YOUR OWN COURSE – NOT THEIRS!

**Steven Flick:**

Given the many years I have been orienteering I do continue to make mistakes and I suppose that is one of the attractions of the sport, always trying for that perfect run and more often than not falling short. Probably my biggest weakness is on the "long" leg, especially if the long leg is the first leg. The course setter does not allow any time to settle into the map and you must plan your route very carefully. The long leg really needs to be broken down into several shorter legs and several attack points need to be identified along the way. Probably one of my best examples of this lack of technique was the first leg of Day 1 ( a "long" leg) at the Easter 3 Days this year. I ended up at the third control first, having strayed off course (and well and truly lost contact with the map) by many hundreds of metres. Mistakes happen and when they do for me it tends to make me concentrate just that little bit more at the next event.

**Bruce Dawkins:**

Getting lost!

I don't mean lost in the sense that I couldn't find my way back to the assembly, but lost in the sense of contact with the map. This often results in loss of valuable time by having to find some prominent feature like a track or fence in order to relocate. Unfortunately, this happened again last weekend.

**Marina Iskhakova:**

My most typical mistake in orienteering is to run with higher speed than those that allows me to think efficiently and to make best solutions, and sometimes closer to the end of a very successful run, to start rest on laurels.

**Fedor Iskhakov:**

My most typical mistake in orienteering is not to come to the start mentally prepared for the course I'm about to run.

**Pierre Francoius:**

Don't look at the map enough at the start and follow other orienteers.

#### 4. Terry on Northern Territory Championships

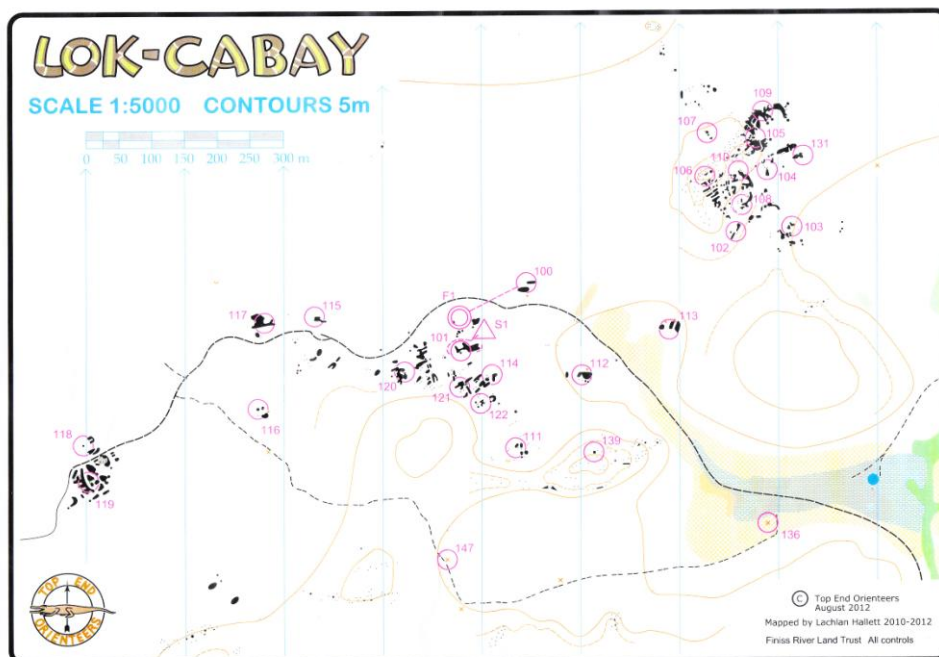
Cheryl and I decided to go to Darwin for the Northern Territory Championships because we loved Darwin and had many fond memories from previous visits. We had never orienteered there before and were looking forward the events, we also had Tracy with us. It was the first time she was able to leave Paul and the children behind for a few days.

I enjoyed the events as much as any I've attended in all my years of orienteering. The carnival started with a sprint event around the Charles Darwin University campus with the final legs along the sand dunes near Casuarina Beach. After the event there was a barbeque on site with us all watching the sun go down over the Arafura Sea. The weather was warm but not too hot for running.

The next events were at Lok Cabay, about 100km south of Darwin near the town of Batchelor. There was an afternoon score event then a night event on a 1:5000 map of weird stromatolite rocks and nothing much else in the way of contours or vegetation changes. It was easy to pick out the shapes of the rocks in daylight but a different matter at night when the dark rocks loomed up in the headlights in a completely flat landscape. In the dark it was hard to pick exactly which rock was the one that loomed up ahead. If you couldn't keep on an accurate compass bearing, you could get into serious trouble. The Top End Orienteers put on a great fully catered feast that night. It was incredible, a gourmet feast in the middle of the nowhere under the stars and the dark stromatalite rocks.

The final day was at the same venue but with an extended map running into some lovely granite terrain. The final legs came back into the stromatalites, but this time the rocks appeared much smaller on the map as the scale was now 1:10000 or 1:15000.

The carnival was a great success, there was a strong field of elites for the National O league events. The weather was great, the temps got up to about 30° in the day but the humidity was low, the locals were complaining about the cold but for us southerners it was great. The maps and courses were interesting and the social events were great. Well done Top End Orienteers. I highly recommend going to Darwin for orienteering when the next big event is held. **Terry Bluett**

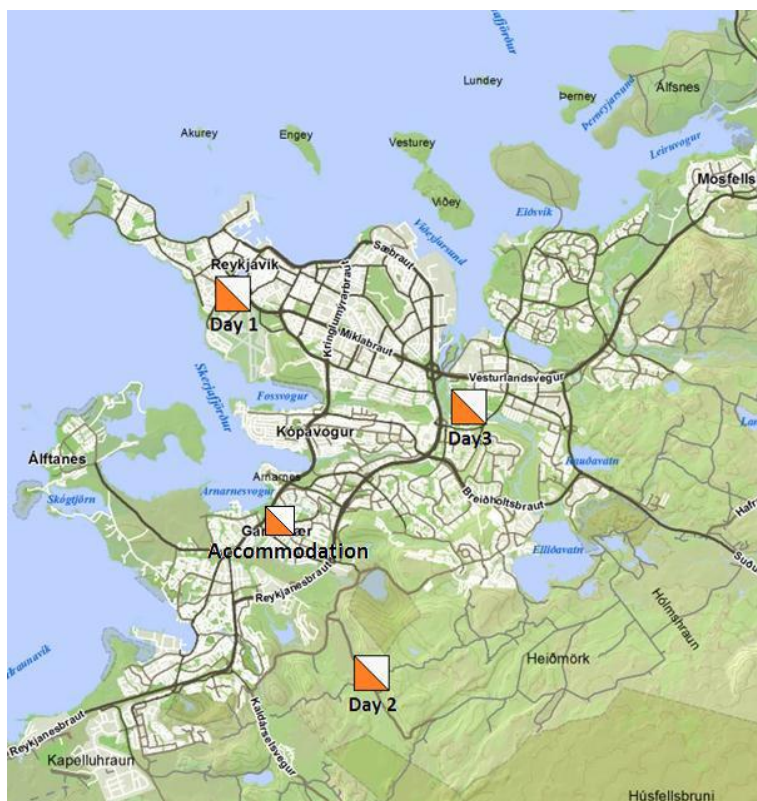


## 5. Kathy and Mel's "The Ice-O" story

In July, Mel and I went on a holiday over to Europe, and, of course, we just had to include some orienteering as part of this holiday. We timed our holiday with the third ICE-O competition to be held in Iceland. We had previously been to Iceland three times but never for orienteering so this time we were keen to try orienteering over there. So, we stashed our southern hemisphere compasses, broke out our northern hemisphere compasses, and off we went.

Firstly, a bit about the ICE-O. It is part of the larger North Atlantic Orienteering Competition (NATLOC) that spans three countries – Greenland, Iceland and the Faroe Islands with three events in each country – a sprint, long distance and middle distance event. Points are given to the top five runners in each event in each country. The runner who has the most points in the end, is announced North Atlantic Champion of Orienteering.

This year's ICE-O was centered around the Reykjavik area.



### **Day 1 – Reykjavík Miðbær – 1:4.000**

This was my favourite event. It was located in the centre of Reykjavik. The assembly area was located at the University in town. From there the courses took us across the park land, into the town with its intricate streets and back around the lake. My favourite part was orienteering around the Althing – the Parliament building.

I personally didn't have a good event result-wise – for a sprint, taking 5 minutes to find the first control was not good. Mel did very well and was coming third after the first day with 21.03 mins to complete the 3km course. I was so fazed by the north lines that were printed diagonally up the page and the start times being called in Icelandic. I knew I should have learned more Icelandic other than how to order a ham and cheese sandwich without cucumber! It was lovely walking around town seeing all the old buildings and the archaeological dig was fascinating

## Day 2 – Vífilsstaðahlíð – 1:10.000



Bright and early we made our way down to BSI Bus Terminal to wait for the bus out to the event. The bus came promptly at 9am and drove us off to the forest where the start was located. The boys organising the event then transported people and gear off to the remote assembly area by car.

### Mel rests after Day 2's event 1

The first part of the course was located on a hillside mostly covered by a mixture of low birch forest and lupin. The second part was across lava that was covered in moss. This lava was an area of complicated contours with many depressions and pits.



I had had a cunning plan overnight on how to deal with the north lines on the diagonal.....fold the map corners so that the lines were straight up and down. I was keen to put this idea in place. So

I set off up the hill. I soon learned to hate lupins and birch trees! I found the battle amongst the waist-deep lupins and birch trees with their strong iron bar-like branches far too much for my knees and once I fought my way to the road after control 8 (halfway through the course), gave up and walked back along the road to the finish. Apparently I had done the tough stuff and the bit across the lava was far easier. Mel battled to the end and finished the 4.2km course in 67 minutes.

### **Day 3 – Elliðaárdalur – 1:5.000**

Day 3 was located on a local lava flow that was around apparently 4.500 years old. There was a variety of vegetation and open areas with two rivers framing the area. This led to it being a bit wet underfoot in places though. The area was very pretty, with scenic waterfalls down one of the rivers. The forest was also far friendlier being mature fir forest with a beautiful carpet of needles underneath. Another thing that I noticed was a section of rabbit holes and rabbits feeding. I guess the winter snow keeps their numbers under control in Iceland.

We both enjoyed our runs over the 3.7km course. Mel finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place in 43.26 mins and I finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in 91.20 mins.

#### **Organisation**

All three countries are fairly new to orienteering and clubs have not been going long. This was in fact the first time that the Faroe Islands had run an event such as this and the Iceland organisers went across to help.

Even though the Reykjavik club is very small and new to orienteering, it was amazing how organised and well equipped they were. The whole event seemed to be organised by a maximum of 5 people. They had a wonderful van that had a slide window at the side that was their 'finish tent'. This provided their power source for the download laptops without the need for a noisy generator that would have shattered the Icelandic serenity. It also provided a waterproof area for the finish. When you finished you went straight up to the van to download and get your splits.

The official accommodation and social event were out of town but easily reached by public transport. For the events out of town, a bus was organised to take everyone out there and return later in the afternoon. This worked very well.

The Social on the Saturday night was a very enjoyable event. The Icelandic lamb was delicious. It was great meeting up with people from all sorts of countries. It was particularly interesting to hear about the orienteering in Greenland the previous week. We will definitely be going there next year!

#### **Next Year**

The NATLOC event will be happening again next year. The planning for the ICE-O is already underway. The dates for the ICE-O are 28 – 30 June 2013.

Mel and I have brochures from the ICE-O team giving some dates and details of all events. Please let us know if you want one.

The following NATLOC site gives the tentative dates for all three countries events and also suggestions on accommodation and how to travel between countries:

<https://sites.google.com/site/natloc2012/natloc-2013>

If you would like to know more about the event, please come and see either Mel or me.

**Kathy Cox**



## 6. Darren's Japanese story

### Mount Fuji



When embarking on a hiking adventure, one usually gets up in the wee hours of the morn, planning to hit the hills just as the sun breaks over the horizon. Not in Japan, for on the other side of the planet sometimes things are a bit topsy-turvy! The Japanese like to start their day with a meal of fish and rice. They write starting at the top right of the page and work down to the bottom left. They even speak in reverse; “日本人は逆の順序で話す。” - word for word that translates to “Japanese reverse order speaking are”. My Japanese hike is going to start at the end of the day and finish in the morning!

Leaving an Australian winter, I arrive in Japan to a day of wandering the bustling streets and quite parks whilst being embraced by Tokyo's balmy summer sun. That night I meet up with an Aussie expatriate and old flatmate of mine to plan the hike and indulge in the local delicacies of sushi and sake. The next morning we woke at an easy 11am, packed our hiking packs, and eventually set off for the bus station at 2pm. Meeting with a half dozen more friends from Australia, Spain and Germany we board a coach to Gotenba, about 90 minutes down the motorway. At Gotenba station we swap over to local bus to the trailhead, up some steep switchbacks; From an altitude of 400m to 1900m. On the way we pass the mysteriously titled Suicide Forest. It is said that the forest is so thick and dark that whoever enters never returns. Compasses don't work there either. Sounds like a brilliant orienteering challenge to me!

Every region has its specialty food, and apparently Fuji's is mushrooms. That meant dinner was mushroom-mania. After dining on mushroom curry, mushroom noodles and mushroom rice, we take our first steps up the mighty Mt Fuji at 8pm. The sun has now set and our challenge is to make it to the peak before it rises again. The temperature is a pleasant 25 degrees Celsius. Wearing shorts, t-shirts and headlamps the first



leg took us to an altitude of 2400m. Some quick calculations on our progress had us hitting the peak ahead of schedule! As we climb it gets progressively colder. By 2800m we are zipping the long legs onto our pants and slipping on jumpers and jackets. The air is still and silent and there is a mist growing down in the valley below. In the distance about where the horizon should be there is an eerie yellow-green glow coming from the direction of Tokyo. We gaze up the

mountain trying to spot the light of the next hut, our next rest point. We continue to hike upwards; the crushed rock beneath our feet is becoming finer, and now the climb is like walking up a pile of gravel. The altitude starts to get to some of our crew too. Our small breaks became more frequent, and our big breaks are becoming longer. At 3200m it is clear our time estimates aren't looking promising. Coming around a rise we see the next station, a tiny hut with a petrol generator running a single light and a hot water urn. Our confidence is waning and some of the gang considers staying at the hut until sunrise, but after 2 cups of coffee and a short rest we are back in action.

3am. 7 hours into our hike. The trail is starting to get very busy. Two other climbing routes have converged on our own, and we are all trying to make the summit by 4:20am! To make things more difficult, some of the hikers have given up on the climb and are sitting along the sides of the track, leaving just enough space for one person to pass through at a time. 4am. We are getting quite worried we aren't going to make the top for sunrise. 15 minutes of queuing and then we see an area of bare rock. With a final burst of energy we put our rock climbing skills to work and take off to the side of the track and start to scramble up the mountain. Passing a huge number of people we remerge with the track and finally make it to the summit to be greeted by thousands people from all over the world, and two Coke vending machines. Finding my own personal rock to perch on, I begin snapping photos of the horizon as the sky shifts from green, to blue, to red, then orange.



There are two sunrises a day on top of Mount Fuji. The first is when the sun passes the horizon but has not yet risen above the cloud, appearing as a deep red disc, just like in the Japanese national flag. The second sunrise about 20 minutes later is when the sun breaches the cloud. A strong white beam of light blasts across the sky and a breeze suddenly sweeps around me. It is now only 4 degrees. I look around and can now see the faces of my fellow hikers, with their wide open jaws. It feels as though we are the survivors of a shipwreck, who after a night fighting the roaring seas have made it to shore on an island amongst an ocean of white wisping clouds, gazing at the sunrise and thanking the heavens that we have survived the night. I get up and begin to explore the summit. Behind me a deep, snow-laden pit, reminds me that this island on which I stand is a giant dormant volcano.





Mount Fuji, at 3776 metres, is Japan's highest mountain. For 10 months of the year the snow and risk of avalanche make it unclimbable to all but the most sure footed of mountaineers. The winter conditions are similar to those found on the 8000-metre Himalayan peaks. The last eruption was in January 1708 and although considered a low eruption risk, after the recent earthquakes in Japan the pressure in the magma chamber is rising and there is broadening speculation that it may erupt again. Perhaps next time I climb Mount Fuji it will be even taller.

*You can find more photos from the trip at <http://tinyurl.com/ds-japan>*

#### **ENJOY READING!**

The last 2012 Newsletter is scheduled for December, 15<sup>th</sup>.  
Thank you very much for your exciting contribution and time!  
We are always waiting for your news!

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