



Big Foot Prints

Issue #80

August 2006

Editorial Rant

Rant 1 – Technology

I love technology – rocking horses rock, (and so do rocking chairs). New technology in orienteering has to offer something to either the competitor or to the organiser. In NSW where there are many events and few competitors, its important that technology improves the lot of the organiser or is (at least) effort neutral.

SportIdent

When the association first proposed using SportIdent, some clubs (including Big Foot) were reluctant to commit to it. With hindsight we were right – it cost a stack of money and turned out to be the wrong horse in the technology race.

By requiring the use of time-programmed field units which consume significant amounts of power, the design of SportIdent places a new load on event organisers which is often not offset by the saving on results calculation donkey work. At many events the combination of technological challenge and organiser overload has been too great and the event has been affected.

The introduction of a new “faster” SportIdent dibber for competitors has been greeted with no action. Surely this is just gaining an advantage through no physical or navigational effort ? When the IOF approves electronic punching systems, they do so on the basis of a level playing field for all competitors. How can they have approved the concurrent use of this new dibber ?

Electronic Entries

Struggling through the bodedged up half-baked “electronic” entry system we have is enough to make you design and implemena proper one. Watch this space.

If we do implement a proper electronic entry system, lets force everyone to use it, as we used to all be forced to have cheque-books. Half-baked and duplicated manual/electronic systems cause miscakes and wasted effort.

Rant 2 – The price of Petrol

Even with the price of petrol at near-world record levels, we just can't burn it fast enough.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommended that CO2 emissions generated by human activity should be reduced to a level currently equivalent to 1.36 tonnes of CO2 emissions per person per year to stop the planet's heating at a pleasant temperature.

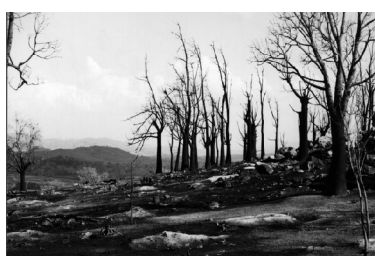
We typically spend 70% of our emission producing energy on powering homes, offices, industry and agriculture, leaving 30% for our cars, jet boats and leaf blowers. That means we get to emit 408 Kg of CO2 on said items.

The 560km return trip from Sydney to Snow Hills in a petrol powered car sucking up a 8l/100km will generate 103kg of CO2.

You don't have to be an evil genius to figure out that 103 doesn't go many times into 408. Carry on like this and we'll roast the planet. We're so evil - bwahahahah !

While we are waiting for the biodiesel, boron-water and super-Priuses to deliver us from evil, we can make our orienteering events carbon neutral by buying high quality carbon offsets. Lets do it.

[censored]



Nero's Copse, Stromlo

Inside

Big Foot Sprints, Easter 3 Days

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big foot events

The big event coming up is the NSW champs. To be held on a map which is definitely not Snow Hills. Volunteers – call the organiser and put your calendar in their hands.

3rd September (Sunday), NSW Champs, near Mayfield (SE of Tarago). Organiser Paul Marsh - phone 9427 7628.

October-March (Wed), not 1, not 2, but 3 Summer Series Events ! Good grief. Watch the email list for details.

email bits

[\[censored\]](#)

mapping news



The new St Ives map was used at Metro League 4 with great success. Simon threw the majority of the competitors straight into the rock where they floundered or flourished.

Andrew and Debbie are working on a new summer series map near Northbridge. Lets hope they return from their holidays without encountering the man-munching Icelandic Igotamus so that they can complete it.

president's piece



Firstly, a huge thank you to Paul Marsh for his tireless work as Big Foot president over the last few years. He's done a great job coordinating and encouraging the club's events and made the recent period one of the most successful in our history.

I'm proud that the club has a reputation for good quality events and I'm looking forward to another one at the NSW Foot-O Champs on an extended Snows Hill map.

Paul was instrumental in both the first Snows Hill NSW Champs (in 2002) and the one next month. It's a popular area with all ages and it's been very worthwhile for our club (as well as NSW and ACT).

Also, congratulations to Paul and Tracy on the arrival of Jamie, a brother for Tiia. I imagine Paul is looking forward to spending more time organizing his own family rather than the rest of us !

Congratulations also to Paul Darvodelsky who finally made it to an orienteering World Championships. He competed in the World MTBO events in Finland, after missing out several previous WOC's through injury and misfortune.

We have another very busy period ahead of us, in both Foot and MTB orienteering. In MTBO, the club is organizing the Tour des Montagnes coming up and the Australian Champs in a year's time. And there are 3 Summer Series competitions that the club is putting on when it gets warmer. Thanks to all those who have volunteered to take on these events.

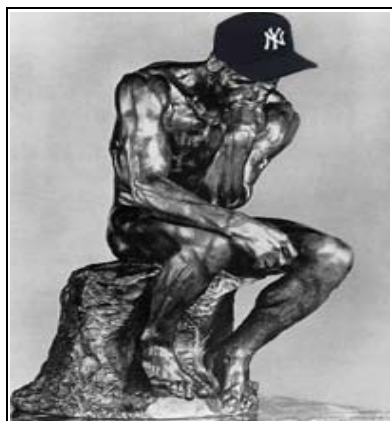
There are also some State association matters to consider. It seems likely that the number of State League events will decrease in the coming years, as they are comparatively less popular than the other races closer to Sydney. I'm a bit disappointed about this, but the organization of State Leagues has been disproportionate to the attendances of late. The association has also been committed to the World Masters Orienteering in 2009, which is to be centred on Lithgow. Unfortunately, it is likely that our Lidsdale Forest map will be embargoed until that event, and the pine is scheduled to be felled soon after. I realize that many in the club spent time there mapping and checking only last year, but there are few appropriate maps close to Lithgow. It will be a shame to lose Lidsdale for the next couple of years.

Most of the little feet were busy at our St Ives Metroleague, selling the biscuits & cakes they (and their Mums) had prepared the previous day. They raised a tidy sum of money and valiantly consumed all the leftover sticky goods. It's their intention that the club buy a banner to rally troops at events with the profits. So please buy any sweet food they stick in front of you at the next Metroleague!



Paul Kotala demonstrates an early club flag.

A design fault meant that it only ever worked in the Northern Hemisphere.



What I think about ...

Each edition Big Foot Sprints invites a club member about another sport/hobby/pastime that they take part in and asks them to reflect on how it relates to orienteering. **Mike Burton** steps out of the shadows cast by Connie's regular media appearances to talk to the editor about astronomy.

BFP: Hi Mike, welcome to the Big Foot virtual studio. We're not going to mention astrology this time, but presumably you have a fairly good mental map of the visible sky even though you have superpower infra-red vision yourself. Do you use the zodiac constellations as a basic framework to organise your map ?

MB: What's the zodiac? Isn't it some kind of attack vehicle used by Greenpeace when pursuing Japanese whalers?

BFP: When you moved back to Australia, apart from the equatorial constellations, everything else must have been fairly new to look at, and the zodiac constellations must have been upside down. Did you get lost, or do you rarely navigate by the stars ?

MB: You might be surprised to hear that hardly any professional astronomers know their way around the night sky at all! You simply type your coordinates into the computer and off the telescope goes and finds the object of interest. In fact, there is a certain loss of professional pride if you study something you might be able to see with your own eyes!

MB: So, no loss of orientation, since there was never any to begin with!

MB (still): If you want to know what a particular star is, then the best bet is to find an amateur astronomer - they're fanatics!

BFP: You have a pretty good record at rogaines which are traditionally held when there is a full moon, thus reducing the number of stars visible. Do you think you could have done better if the events had been held under a new moon when your star reading powers could be improved ?

MB: It's those solar storms which get me, blasting cosmic rays into the ionosphere and changing the polarity of my compass. It just keeps sending me off in the wrong direction. And who would have thought that it was the north magnetic pole in the south, and the south magnetic pole in the north? Far better moving to Venus where there are no magnetic currents to disorient one, and no light to ever see by.....

BFP: How far is your new house above sea level ? Compare and contrast with the amount of water stored in the Greenland and Antarctica ice caps.

MB: About 1 West-Antarctic ice sheet. However Wisemans Ferry Road might be taken out by the collapse of the Greenland ice cap.....

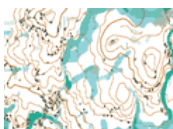
BFP: Finally, for a long time you were nick-named "quitter" following a couple of DNFs, possibly including a run in the Big Foot City-to-Surf team. This nick-name was successfully shed last millenium, but we noticed that Connie wasn't so happy about your DNF at the O'Shea Two Days this year, negating the effects of her fine run, where she thrashed eventual cake-winner Nicky Nygh. Do you think there is a chance that people will drag the old nick-name out of the bag, or will you get away with this one provided the reptiles of the press don't notice ?

MB: But you forget to say where Bagel Oberon ended up that day!

New small person

Only one new small person since the last edition (we think):

Welcome to the planet Jaimie Nathan Marsh - 2nd August 2006. right into the 4 kilo and over class at 4.6 Kg.



Event Reports



World Mountain Bike Orienteering – Big Foot Sprints – Easter 3 Days

World Mountain Bike Orienteering Championships – Finland

Freshly returned and repaired after last issue's trip to Slovakia, Paul Darvodelsky's mission for 2006 was to arrive at the World Championships intact. We extracted words and pictures from the team blog (see <http://www.ozmtbteam.sovcialfx.net>) to piece together exactly what happened. Apologies if the material is familiar.

Long Distance Qualification

My plan was to start steadily and ride my own race. I did this very well until our 9th check point. Then I took a poor route and lost about 2-3 minutes stuffing around, even though I was very close to the check point. Here we had a map change and I was a little scrappy in the next few, but didn't make any mistake. On the way to 13 though I did have a bit of a blow out. I took the obvious route, although as I rode past some houses, realised that it was marked out of bounds on the map. Albeit a little unclearly. By the time I got out of it I'd hit some officials with a sign. So I asked "am I disqualified?" and they said, not if you go back. So I rode back straight away and did the leg they way the organisers had intended it. But lost 2-3 minutes. At this stage I knew that I would be borderline for qualification for the long but pressed on.



Note the out-of-bound hatching that just crosses the track

I immediately took the road route to 15 to steady myself and did this quite well. From 15 you could either go a long way around on the flat or go straight with a very steep, walk only, hill to start. I chose the round route and it wasn't good. I lost about 3 minutes on this and that was that. I pretty much knew before I hit the finish. One mistake on this terrain is

ok. Two was a problem, but 3 was too many. So I ended up 22nd, I think, because we haven't seen final results. And many people have been disqualified for riding out of bounds. Also there will be many protests about this, as you can see, it wasn't that clear. Of course it's easy to see when you sit on your bed afterwards!

Middle Distance Final

Think of Mosquito Flat. Think of Canadian. Then double the number of tracks. Then reduce the scale to 1:10,000. Only then would you have as many tracks as the middle distance race .

This is a type of terrain only encountered in a few parts of the world. Apart from here, Estonia, Russia and possibly a few areas in Latvia. It was always going to be very hard to beat these nations, particularly the Finns in this home terrain.

Alex Randall and Adrian Jackson started in the 'red' group. The first 10 ranked riders in the world, who started last. Apart from our own races most of our energy and thoughts were with them, as potential medal winners. Both rode excellent races, but not without mistakes, to place 7th and 17th in 53 and 55 minutes. A local Finn won in a shade under 50 minutes, with former world champions, Mika Tervala and Ruslan Gritsan 2nd and 3rd.

Picking up the map, one could be forgiven for thinking there had been a printing mistake. It looked like all the tracks had been printed twice! Most of us took a good portion of our 1 minute to find the first check point on the map.

Carolyn Jackson rode her characteristic very steady race. At the moment we've not seen the final results, just having got back to our

hotel. Paul Darvodelsky had a very clean race, posting 61 minutes for 45th place. Steve Cusworth rode fast, but made mistakes and came in in 64 and Dave Simpfordorfer rode 74 minutes. To give an idea of the complexity of the area, the longest time of the day was 162 minutes!

In an area which really required local knowledge of this sort of terrain, the Aussies have done really well.

:
45. Paul Darvodelsky AUS 1.01.58 +12.08
46. Matej Pilka SVK 1.02.10 +12.20
47. Andy Simpson GBR 1.02.11 +12.21
48. Giaime Origgi ITA 1.02.24 +12.34
:
57. Steven Cusworth AUS 1.05.10 +15.20
:
77. Greg Barbour NZL 1.13.19 +23.29
:
88. Eoin Rothery SLEDGE 1.18.31 +28.41
:

Relay Final

We didn't think it was possible, but the relay had even more difficult terrain than we'd encountered so far.

After the very long, long in which Paul didn't ride and Alex ended up taking it

a bit easier after an early mistake, we thought this would be a good start for us. Both Paul and Alex were relatively fresh and raring to go for the relays. All three had ridden without big mistakes in the complex middle distance terrain and were confidently looking forward to the challenge in the relay. Paul had even found what he suspected, and turned out to be, the first and 2nd relay check points out in the forest when riding parts of the B-Final.

But it was not to be. In fact the day turned from bad to worse, to laughable as we managed to find new and inventive ways to DNF. Out of 6 riders in two Aussie teams 4 of us didn't finish. At this point it's important to say that Carolyn and Steven were the riders who finished.

So what happened?

Paul started strongly on a medium length split and rode with only a few small mistakes. He came back 20th, but the courses were split with up to 5 minutes difference, and we were only behind 10th by about 2 minutes.

The problem was the 5th check point. We had resolved as a team to check our codes carefully. Paul did this religiously, but mis-read 338 which he found, as 335, which he should have found. The offending check point is in the picture below. Number 329 on the lake was common and then it split to the three. We were not happy with the closeness of the check points or the numbers and their placement on the map, but there was nothing we could do after the fact.

Alex went out without knowing but Paul was sent to what they call the 'cry wall' which we got to know as the 'wailing wall'. The organisers confirmed our worst fears – that Paul had mis-punched and that we were out of the race. Fortunately the organisers were very slow at stopping disqualified teams and we all got to ride before they started stopping teams go out.

Alex also raced very well, only dropping a minute or so on the flying Mika Terval. He pulled us up to 7th place. At least notionally. But then when Paul went to apologise he found that Alex had mis-punched 3 check points and one of these didn't have the verification pin prick in the back-up paper. So he too had DNF'ed. This was mostly a feature of the emit system used for punching. It's far harder to use for MTBO and the card must be put into the check point the right way up. It seems Alex had put it in upside down, and it didn't register or mark the paper. As a result of all the problems at this WOC the MTBO Commission meeting resolved that EMIT should not be used for MTBO major events any more.

This left AJ to race. Adrian knew that our team had DNF'ed but fortunately got out on the course before the organisers starting stopping teams. As usual he raced fast and sure and had a great ride, bringing the team up to 4th place. (One has to wonder what other riders wonder when someone like AJ catches them?) Which the finish announcer called briefly, then quickly added that

Australia was disqualified. Then it transpired that AJ too had missed a check point at the same place I did. He found 335 instead of 337, although, in fairness, I'm sure he would have checked his codes more carefully if he knew we were still in the race. So I guess you could say we showed great potential, but didn't really get there.



Those cheeky Finns are at it again !



Metro League Update

The Big Fat Division 1 team will be up against WHO in the Metro League Grand Final, having finished the season as undefeated minor premiers.

The Division 3 team live to fight another year in the minors after a bright start spluttered to a series of low-shows.

President Jock Davis chose not to copy Liz Ellis, captain of the undefeated Sydney Swifts, as she prepared for the grand final against the Adelaide Thunderbirds.

"It's nice to have gone through the home-and-away season undefeated, but it's simply nice," she said. "If we are not holding that trophy on Friday night that streak means nothing. By the way, have you noticed that a lot of weird crimes go down in Adelaide?"

World Rogaining Champs Update

Following the shock scratching of the Diurnal Duo, the remaining Big Foot teams are:

Mounty & TBA; Mountain devils (Mark Freeman & Martin Krause); Gerorge/Parr (Simon & Jo); Megvan (Sue, Walter & Richard Sage).

Andrew L, Debbie and probably Alexa will be up there moving controls etc. Good luck everyone.

Australian 3-Days, Castlemaine, Victoria

Whilst some jet-setting Bigfooters flew in to the Easter orienteering at Castlemaine in Victoria and another family chose to take a week or so to get there the long way round, we decided to do the grin-and-bear-it “when will we be there?” version. Actually it was OK – apart from Alastair asking before we left Pennant Hills Rd whether we were there yet and would it be a long journey?.....

Bigfoot had a good turn out for the annual orienteering fashion show. Way out in front was Tracy who had the good manners to walk in the finish chute and let lesser mortals overtake her. Second in the fashion stakes was Undy – with his Swanees arm plaster-cast and matching stripe of scabs and stitches from chin to forehead, he looked like the stuff of nightmares.



Nick and Michaela get ready to run

Second nightmare – one of the “girls” in the tents next door calling her boyfriend on the mobile at 1.30am and tell him very loudly for a long time how freaking cold she was (or similar).

Day 1 – Mia Mia

was supposed to have the fastest running.

Wrong! I did my usual Easter trick of blowing out on Day 1 and clawing my way back over the next 2 days. I didn't blow #1 – a major achievement, but I think I got carried away after that with the geology and wandered around admiring the rocky outcrops – why else would I do sooo badly? Now the geology IS interesting, but I'd better stop right there – except do you know how to tell Chinese miners' holes from the rest? – Nope – well neither did I, but the man at the Maldon Gold Mine said the Chinese built theirs round rather than square so that there were no corners for bad spirits to lurk in. Aah haa! Oh yes Day 1 – open spur gully terrain, ripe for parallel errors, very like Inverary without the termite mounds.

Saturday night in Maldon watching the band and Maldon's fire-trucks complete with Easter Bunny, and then dancing on the street to the Macarena and Aserejé- Rebecca teaching me how to wiggle in the right places and wave my hands.

Day 2 – Spring Gully Diggings

now we're talking gold mining: ditches and holes everywhere. One of those great assembly areas (depending on your perspective) where you can watch everyone else making silly mistakes on the hillside opposite, - making mental notes – “don't go to that tree” “avoid that green stuff, he just backed out looking frazzled...”. Only to find yourself 50 minutes later stuck in the same bushes. Easter eggs kept appearing everywhere, particularly under bushes.

I went better – more focussed, perhaps, in and out of deep erosion gullies and around bottomless shafts. By Day 2 the competition is heated – there are people to beat, personal scores to settle. This was particularly obvious in the W21AS (scared of the big girls league W35A) where a certain Nic PC was locked in battle with all her erstwhile W17A mates. The M21 Sledge

class was also off and running (I think they ran) – so that men started prancing around with boxers over their trousers – I particularly like the spotty ones (King of the Mountain?). (Note – Jock, do you think we could introduce this concept to BF Sprints?).

plaster cast up high as he nose dived into a prickly bush (it's that nose again Undy). We had a sprint race up the final shoot – Undy with his broken body and me with a stuffed leg (3 days on top of the old shrapnel wound was just too much) – boy we must have looked good (ish?).

Jo

Day 3 – Dead Man's Flat

ominous name for a scarily complex area. 1:10,000 map with 2.5m contours and 1:15,000 print to squeeze in all the detail. This was fun – particularly the last bit. We started across the road, which meant to finish we had to cross an incredibly busy road (I saw a car). To make sure all OH&S issues were covered, the time crossing the road was not counted and we had a lollipop lady (who sat down on the job) accompanied by ~5 others to ensure safe crossing. Undy and I stopped, looked, listened, waited for a car that never came and did snail impressions across the road. We sat and pondered a while and mentally prepared ourselves for the last legs home before punching the control and sprinting towards the finish. Unfortunately Undy did a good impression of a Swanee going for a diving mark, holding his



Old ladies yacking at the finish chute

Big Foot Sprints – Darks Common, Lapstone

A new planner, a new winner and a new starting spot at on a favourite old map. Richard Lauder and Miranda Coulson put in the effort to produce an excellent Big Foot Sprints.

The first lap looked to be dominated by Big Foot with Simon turning in an excellent performance, just ahead of Mark Freeman. The easiest leg on the course cause problems for many, with Andrew Lumsden leading a string of runners who missed a track junction and almost a control in their haste.

With only a few minutes to go before start times finished for the first lap, a bunch of the NSW stingers rocked up at the event. All four blokes

put time into Simon, whilst Yelena Fairfax overtook Carol as the lap 1 leader in the women's class.

The second lap gave those who had underperformed a chance to redeem themselves, whilst those who had a good first lap had to cling onto their lead.



Carol, despondent after Yelena overtakes her

Dave Meyer led by over a minute after the first lap and was never troubled on the second leg. In fact the first 6 positions were unchanged, so Ben Rattray who ran the fastest last leg still came 4th.

In the women's class a different story unwound, as Julie Gooding took an axe to the field, finally settling with third place and the fastest 2nd lap

time, after taking the longest time for the first lap.



Dave Meyer collects his certificate

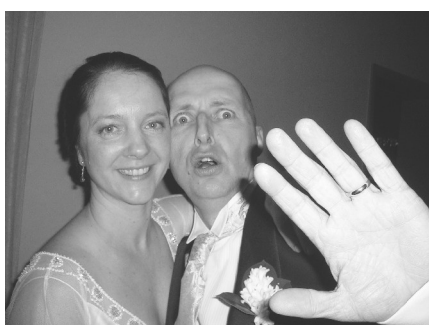
Certificates were designed and presented by an artist who works locally, along with the traditional chocolate prizes.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the event – a cracking time was had by all.

big foot prints

Contributions to Big Foot Prints are welcome – if you aren't badgered by the editor about writing something, then use the unbadgered time to write something and email it to undy@tpg.com.au.

The ice-cream of choice is payable to all contributors under the age of 16.



The last photo taken by Big Foot Prints paparazzi contract before the camera was seized and the photographer was ejected from Sydney's celebrity wedding of the year.

Happy couple Isabel and Albert the Meese haven't commented on claims that pictures of a cat subsequently taken with the camera have been turned over to officers from (ctd page 29).

Mystery Orienteer Competition

Using only the drawing and poetry below, identify the Big Foot member and give your answer (written or drawn) to Andy. First correct answer wins. No prizes for anyone over 16.

Who is it?



Alastair George 2006

Do you know this friend of mine?
He's very tall and nearly nine.

He lives across the valley from me,
He has known me since I was a baby.

He loves his sport like soccer and nippers,
And when he goes swimming he doesn't need flippers.

The Mums and Dads know him well
And I will cast this little spell
And listen closely now I will tell
His name is _____ good and well!

Rebecca George

Map Review - Walking Tracks of the Middle Harbour Valley and Northern Sydney Harbour Foreshores (Sheets 1 & 2)

This is STEP's follow-up to the brilliant "Walking Tracks of the Lane Cove Valley", which was a best seller even though its only 2 pages long. These sheets provide accurate and near-complete mapping for running and walking in Garigal national park and should open up some new runs around Middle Harbour this summer.

Sadly STEP simultaneously released their third album "Walking Tracks of the Middle Harbour Valley and Northern Sydney Harbour Foreshores (Sheets 3 & 4)" concurrently.

The only grounds that this satisfied on was that it upheld the tradition of "disappointing third album". This proved to be something of a disappointment, the area under the surveyors gaze being somewhat limited in walking tracks and the experimental jazz-fusion section was unintelligible.

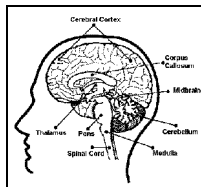
Where to from here for the STEP mapping team ? Well, the Royal National Park map from the Department of (insert current name) is still shambolic. Whilst the 20th century addition was well known for the drawings of Lyre Birds and such like obscuring topographic detail, the current release wastes the back sheet of the map on a state-wide map of National Parks facilities. A production like this done in close co-operation with the National Parks also has the restriction that it doesn't show the tracks and paths that the National Parks wish didn't exist...

Brain Teaser

(submitted by Jock)

It costs \$28 for adults to enter the NSW champs and \$9 for children. Carol has a blue car and a white door. She sends a cheque for \$17.37. Why ?

- 6
- She doesn't want to enter, she has realised that the Big Foot juniors have taken all the food in the house to sell at the event and she is trying to buy it back.
- Carol is a maths teacher and we are too scared to ask her.



Top Tips

Episode 27 – Saving Time

Tip 1 – The Start

Listen to what the starter (or start robot says), even if it seems mundane. Having written your name on the map, make sure that when you pick up the map with your name on it – this mistake is particularly easy to make if (a) you are stupid and/or (b) the maps are not in front of you but to your side as you start. [tip by Andy]

Tip 2 – Control Card

At a bush event, tie your control card onto you somehow, or eventually, one day, you **will** drop it. [tip by Julie G.]

Supplement to Episode 26

Eagle-eyed readers have pointed out that IKEA carry a great line in Summer Series pencils. The price is right, get one now and get it prepared for summer-series. Here are some practice control codes you can train with:

HY PK HH AD WE BE LL MM

Lost & Found

Nicky Nygh – "I was going pretty well until I realised that I didn't know where I was."

Wanted

Nick Wilkinson (to Jo): "I've been looking for a wife who will watch sport"

Technology Update

A number of Big Foot's leading scientific researchers have been working on reducing the rate of trivial injuries sustained in orienteering events. The team working on protecting the head is lead by Cameron Osborne. Whilst the team are yet to report their findings, photographs taken surreptitiously at the secret Big Foot proving grounds indicate the direction of their thinking.



[censored]

[censored]