

## **Inception**

About 18 months ago, Porky and I went pig-shooting. He came up with a hare-brained idea to run an event, and it slowly grew legs.

In a fairly brief period of time we decided we wanted to fly under Liam's Rogue banner. Early on, I was (perhaps too) obsessed with running a novice event until wiser minds prevailed and we later worked out we could run two versions to please everyone.

Early considerations were around location, and soon after we put Mt Crosby on the list, Ben Ferri (custodian of Tyamolum for Scouting Queensland) took us on a guided tour of his patch. The next challenge was to configure the event. Constraints / causes for concern included options for access to the river, access to Moggill CP, safety around Mt Crosby Road bisecting our map, tides, weather (it can still get hot in March), flooding (we were mindful of the flood and were reminded of its impact by the washed out and closed Karalee Boat Ramp).

We scratched around and came up with a basic map (thanks Liam, and to various Orienteering Queensland people who sent what they had. Early scoping excursions took place with Suzie Blissner, Glen Singleton, Craig Jeffs, Porky and myself. Craig and I had a morning paddling up the river, into Kholo Creek, while the others cycled around Moggill, which we thought was brilliant for the MTB leg.

The more we saw the more impressed we were with the area – it was compact (not a big area, but with plenty of variety, some steep sections, some really pretty spots, and some tight, challenging terrain).

Liam helped us overcome a doubtful patch when he finally found us a fleet of boats – it was nearly a two-legged event until then.

## **Planning / Tools**

Once we had a basic map, I loaded it into GPS Utility, which is "an old friend". Once calibrated, the image of a map can be used to overlay tracks, waypoints etc. So we used it to enhance the map (by overlaying tracks from the GPS, and tracing those onto the OCAD version). Thanks Liam, Craig, Peter McCallum for your assistance with the maps. We used GPS Utility to "armchair set" the course, and for the taping phase.

Then I heard a story on radio about Team App. This is an Aussie-designed app, probably designed for more conventional team sporting fixtures. It seemed to work a treat for us allowing us to send news items, create events (the training night) and record teams. It is configurable, so you can control what is made available in terms of links to sponsors, etc. Globe Trekker's web page looks as if it's integrated!

Porky's idea to engage the SES was brilliant – in the end those crews made the event – they seemed to be everywhere (and were). Their rope extract from the river was a highlight – lots of people loved it and commented. He ran an SES camp weekend at Tyamolum, involving 30 people to get us GPS data as well as prove the kayak to bike transition may be worth putting in there. Also scoped comms for safety etc.

Their presence on the water, and on busy, dangerous Mt Crosby Road gave us a sense that our participants were being looked after and had a chance of surviving!

### **The Lows...**

- Knowing he has a health battle on his hands, but is always keen, I asked Glen Singleton to be the “official photographer”. Unfortunately Glen had a horror night so was unable to make it on Saturday.
- We had a couple of moments when teams appeared to ignore direction from volunteers (SES specifically). On one occasion I witnessed a team disregard the direction to dismount and walk their bikes across Mt Crosby Road. On another, kayakers ignored SES members who asked them to fasten their PFD correctly. (This person claimed their PFD was too tight. It doesn't excuse him from not responding to the SES crewmember.)
- In retrospect we should have issued a race instruction sheet that would have eliminated some of the apparent confusion at the 6 hour start.
- Navlight dramas leading to errors in our announcement of winners in the 4 hour event.
- People who offered to help and then simply didn't respond or show up.

### **The Highs...**

- Loads of smiling faces, people who genuinely seemed to have enjoyed the course.
- 36 novice teams (plus several 6-hour novice teams)!
- A competitor recovering from a bone-marrow transplant. You can read Perry's excellent race report elsewhere.
- Two gents from “Mates4Mates” an organisation supporting returned service personnel with physical and psychological injuries.
- Young people out competing together, and with an adult partner – at least 5 (I'm sure more) under 16 years of age. There were two junior teams.
- Brett Williams – he is great to deal with – Globe Trekker added some polish to the event, it was great to run the Training Night in his shop – which gave us a great backdrop.
- Brett's contribution included vouchers (given to the winners of each main class), and 16 items of stock which were distributed by lucky draw. He also gave us use of his ute which became the event vehicle for the day!
- The number of people who put their hand up to help on the day. About six or eight people who made great contributions, including Lachie – he set a fantastic example to people many times his age.
- Porky. His workrate is incredible, his ability to multi-task fantastic, his energy boundless, his manner and communication style is positive, persuasive, constructive. It is a pleasure to work with him.

Gordon Bossley