



BLAZING PADDLES

Newsletter of the **BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB**

Winners of the Brian Norman Trophy 2013

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Recent Events and What's In Store for 2014?

 **SPORT & RECREATION ACT**

The ACT Government assists the BGCC through Sport and Recreation ACT



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President's Report: Kiaran Lomas

Well, I hope you all had a great Christmas and now we have to get down to the business of paddling and defending any titles we may have won last year, including the Marathon 10 Club Title. I'd also be interested to see if Santa brought any new boats for members.

December was a busy month. Firstly, I went to the ACT Sports Awards Dinner to Represent Helen Tongway for the Volunteer of the Year award. It was a great evening but unfortunately Helen finished as a runner-up for the award. The evening did highlight the importance of using the monthly sports star awards to raise the profile of the club in the Canberra area. So I encourage everyone to push nominations for teams and individuals for the monthly awards through to the committee to be submitted to ACT Sports.

We were also waiting to find out if we had been successful for our grant bid for the boat shed extensions. And we kept waiting.... Unfortunately, at the meeting held on February 5 to announce what applications for grants have been successful in the ACT, we lost out. Nevertheless I wish to acknowledge the work done by our team, headed by Bob Collins, to prepare the bid for the grant and all the associated development work for the extension.

Margi Bohm and I attended a Lake User Group Meeting to discuss the traffic flow guide for the lake. This has now been released and is included in this issue of Blazing Paddles. You will also see copies show on display in the boat shed. It should be noted that this doesn't include the Molonglo River. So for now when on the river, make sure you keep the pink buoys on your left. I've been spending a bit of time with the SUP paddlers and they are doing a good job training new paddlers on the rules for the river. While we can't enforce this on non-members, mainly the fishermen, it still behoves us to do the right thing.

Finally for December, there was the Murray River Marathon. There were five Canberra paddlers who participated this year. Craig Kentwell did a great job engaging the media and we had good coverage for the race. All paddlers were successful in completing the category they entered and at the presentation, Ben Rake and Tom Hick both received medals for performances in their class. [Stories of some individual's experiences are included in this issue of Blazing Paddles.]

January has been equally busy; mainly coordinating with PaddleNSW for the Marathon10 Series. I thank all those who assisted from a BGCC perspective. To provide a taste, I can confirm at this stage there will be an additional 10 km division for paddlers under 55mins. There are also initiatives being introduced to encourage K-Boat paddlers. I suspect these will impact on the overall point-score and to put a strong defence for the Club Championship title, we need to encourage as many paddlers as possible to start paddling K-Boats.

STOP PRESS:

I regret to advise we were unsuccessful with our application for a Capital Grant to extend the club boat shed. I know the funds would have benefited the club greatly; providing more storage opportunity for members. However, we do have considerable capital to invest and the Club Shed Sub-Committee have been tasked to determine how far we can extend with the funds available. This should be presented at the club meeting in March. In the meantime, note that there is a current initiative to move the canoe polo equipment and some club storage in the former Ladies' Toilets. This should allow us to investigate creating some SUP storage in the near



future. At the same time I will be getting the Boat Captain to conduct a block and stack activity to create more storage in the club shed with the available space.

There are no plans to change the current arrangement with the Ice Dragon's use of the former Men's Toilets. I do not foresee any change to the extant arrangements with the Ice Dragon's until new facilities are constructed in East Basin (as per current plans ACT Government Plans).

Again, this is disappointing news, but I do not believe we should roll over yet; there are still a couple of avenues to further develop the club location. Thanks for your continuing support for the club.

Important Notices for all BGCC Lake Users

Rowing Regatta Dates

8 Feb

22 Feb

1 & 2 March

These are the dates that Canberra Rowing regattas are being conducted. Paddlers are advised to stay clear of the rowing course on these dates.

From the Editor's Desk: Scott MacWilliam

As the President has indicated, the Club's application for funds to build a major extension to the shed has been rejected. This decision is deeply disappointing and it does not do justice to the strength of BGCC in so many disciplines. As Editor I regularly see the Newsletters which other clubs publish. None come near *Blazing Paddles* as summaries of activities and achievements across so many areas. Our Club officials and Conveners are outstanding in their ability to encapsulate the various areas in which club members participate. This issue of *Blazing Paddles* is typical, and it is hoped that all BGCC members will read and marvel at the variety of talents described here.

As well as providing stories and pictures of Club activities, *Blazing Paddles* aims to convey important information about matters which concern Club officials. Whether drawing attention to coming events, plans for directions to be taken by the Club or alerting members to important decisions, this Newsletter provides news that will appeal to all Members as well as to advise them of the Club's place in the wider world. In particular this issue draws attention to the changes being implemented by PaddleNSW for the coming marathon series, including the bias toward ICF boats.

It also reports meetings which have taken place in Canberra about usage of the lake and river. Inadvertent straying on to the wrong side of both waterways is discouraged, whether or not equipment failure was involved. Please keep pink buoys on your left and traverse the lake in an anti-clockwise direction, while keeping an eye open for rowers and their support boats. Having just fallen in on East Basin when not paying sufficient attention to the bow waves thrown up by four racing dragon boats, the Editor can attest to the need for constant vigilance on all waterways. Paddling is becoming increasingly popular, as the sight of 24 SUPs heading across East Basin one Sunday morning for coffee attests. The river and lake are becoming more and more crowded and all paddlers are being asked not only to look at the map on lake usage displayed in the shed, but to exercise caution and courtesy toward others. Even if these virtues are not always practiced by others, let us try to be exemplary.

A Letter to All Club Members from the Secretary: Tom Hick

I'm writing this fresh from last night's (3 Feb 2014) Club meeting and thinking that whilst Burly Griffin Canoe Club meetings are open to all Members and many do attend, not everyone attends and we don't have a 100% method of advising members of what is happening. I'm a bit of a technophobe and when they talk of Facebook, Twitter and the like, I'm lost. A simple note in the Club magazine and I'm happy; hence I'm writing this to bring readers up to date on recent developments.

In the few years I have been a member, the Club has undergone quite a considerable change and grown substantially. Looking just at Membership numbers it is clear the Club has doubled, but that is not the whole picture. Participation in activities by members has also increased. We can speculate on why this is so but it won't change the fact that in the last 5 years the shed had one extension effectively doubling its capacity and we are desperately in need of and are committed to a further extension.

This growth is expected to continue and at last night's meeting, we accepted a very comprehensive proposal from the Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) community to establish within the Club an SUP Discipline simply called "Capital SUP". I guess that since the President is the first and only person to have completed a Murray Marathon on a SUP this isn't a surprise and even before we get the shed extension completed no one should be surprised to find Club SUPs and a few racks for members' boards. Also on the SUP subject, Wetspot and Naish, a board manufacturer, will be holding a one-class competition at Molonglo Reach on 2 March. The exact details are to be worked out but, once again, it is a Club-supported activity which should be a lot of fun and if successful will hopefully become an annual event.

The Discipline Conveners are key elements of the running of the Club, representing the views of their constituents in meetings. It has been great to see the cooperation in the meetings clearly demonstrating there is no us and them, it is all about the Club with folk from different disciplines assisting other disciplines with their activities to allow maximum participation.

Canoe Polo has been a strong and successful Discipline within the Club for years and is still growing and contributing to the Club. This Easter, because of their efforts, we are hosting the National Canoe Polo Championships at Molonglo Reach.

At the last few Club meetings we have been looking at some of the implications of the growth in membership. Last night for example, we dealt with 6 applications from Members for keys to the shed. There are now over 100 members with keys and the cosy old days where everyone knew everyone are over.

Other issues we've dealt with over the last few meetings:

- It is a condition of use of Club boats that a Lifejacket be worn when on the water. Yes there is an exception to this rule but only one - when competing in a sanctioned race where water safety craft are deployed and the race organisers do not require a Lifejacket to be worn;
- Overnight and away from Molonglo Reach booking of Club boats is through and entirely at the discretion of the Boat Captain or Deputy. The Committee is discussing the option to charge a fee or deposit when the boat is removed from the Molonglo Reach area;
- For the first time, we have Junior Members who aren't the children of Members and we now have to manage the implications for not only the Coaches and Instructors who may be interacting with them, but the Club as a whole. This remains under discussion. In the short term, pending a thorough review and risk assessment, Junior Members may only use Club boats when supervised by a Club Coach or Instructor. Member parents may make application at a Club meeting to be allowed to supervise their own child in a Club Boat. The standard Lifejacket rule applies;
- The picture wall was getting clumsy and rather than displaying a picture of every Member, it was decided that from now on we would only display pictures of the Committee, Discipline Conveners, Coaches, Instructors, and Guides etc. For Members using Club boats, we will still require a picture (digital) to assist the Club Boat Captain and Deputy in managing bookings;
- Guidelines for navigation on the Lake have been promulgated and a map is pinned up in the Shed.

CONVENERS' REPORTS

Flatwater Convener's Report: John Preston

The build-up to the PNSW Marathon series is well under way with many paddlers shaking off the summer malaise and getting stuck into their training. The timetable for races has been announced, along with some new rules which will affect paddlers as well as the different points' competitions (see below). Our race is on March 15 so please be prepared to volunteer your time to ensure we maintain our good reputation for providing a good marathon racing experience for the expected big turn-out.

Marathon Series: Dates and Venues

- Round 1- Saturday 15th March - Burley Griffin Canoe Club, Canberra
(Sunday 16th March Burley Griffin Bash, Burley Griffin Canoe Club)
- Round 2- Sunday 4th May - Central Coast Canoe Club, Wyong
- Round 3- Saturday 17th May - Sutherland Shire Canoe Club, Woronora
- Round 4- Sunday 1st June- Manly Warringah Kayak Club, Narrabeen
- Round 5- Saturday 28th June - Penrith Valley Canoeing Club, Penrith
- Round 6- Saturday 19th July - Makai Paddlers, Burrill Lake
(Sunday 20th July -Lake Lunacy, Makai Paddlers)
- Round 7- Saturday 9th August - Windsor Canoe Club, Windsor
- Round 8- Saturday 30th August - Cronulla Sutherland Kayak Club, Grays Pt
- Round 9- Saturday 6th September Lane Cove River Kayakers, Lane Cove
- Round 10- Saturday 27th September – Final round and Series Presentation
Wagga Bidgee Canoe Club, Wagga Wagga



The Wetspot Summer Time Trials have resumed after a short break over the holiday period. The attendance has been good, especially considering the extreme heat experienced this month. Wayde Margetts continues to lead the point-score, but his lead is within reach of a number of other competitors. The Kingston Loop addition to the paddling options at the Time Trail has proven popular. The loop takes paddlers onto East Basin where the conditions are similar to what can be expected in Ballarat where the 2014 Nationals are being held. It is my intention to open up the loop to more time trial paddlers once the committee have decided on a few issues concerning paddler safety on the lake. I anticipate the compulsory portage will be dropped thus making it easier for the more experienced OS paddlers to use the loop option should they wish to do so.

2 important rules for the time trials that need to be remembered:

1. When you finish your race, whether it is 1 lap, 2 laps, 3 laps or the Kingston loop, you must finish between the blue marker-buoy and the pontoon. This is so the time-keepers know you are finishing and can accurately record your time. Please stay to the left of blue buoy when doing your laps of the course. 1 minute time impositions will be posted on those who consistently break this rule.
2. When negotiating the Time Trial course please stay to the right of the pink buoys which mark out the course.

The Time Trial rules are available on the club website.

Don't forget the Time Trial attracts paddlers of many different levels of ability and confidence. Please be courteous on the water, follow the rules and allow for others to make mistakes probably at the most inconvenient time for you.

A recent incident during our Time Trail has drawn attention to the fact that other river users are not always going to allow us to compete unimpeded by their activities. A couple of anglers decided it would be a good idea to troll a fishing line across the path of Gary Rake as he came into the last kilometre of the race. Gary got caught up in the line with hooks in his hand and his back. The quick thinking anglers decided the best way to resolve the situation was to keep the tension on the line until it snapped. Luckily for Gary, Jason Rantall was on hand to extract the hooks and freed the somewhat miffed Gary from the entanglement. Surprisingly neither fell into the river. Not surprisingly once freed they continued racing. Apparently Gary had a few words with the anglers about which species were allowed to be caught in the Molonglo and that Steph was the only person who was allowed to tie him up with fishing line.

The lesson is that we need to keep our wits about us when on the water and be prepared to assist others who might run into trouble.

2014 PNSW Open Sprint Championships.

Over the weekend of the 18th and 19th of January, the PNSW Open Sprint Championships were held at the SIRC Penrith. Ian Castell-Brown (M75-80); Madeline Chard (F35-40); Breanna Reid (FU16); and John Preston (M60-65) all competed.

The first day of racing saw the temperature soar into the low 40's making racing more difficult than it already is. Breanna Reid was our only competitor to have to face these harsh conditions as the others were not programmed to race until Sunday. Breanna has only been back on the water for a few weeks after a bit of a lay-off and finished 6th in her heat of the Women's Under 16 K1 500m event, in a time of 2:44:83 and thus didn't qualify for the final.

Sunday was a lot better as far as the heat was concerned, only getting into the low 30's. Unfortunately a SE wind strengthened as the day progressed which made the starts difficult as it was a slight cross tail wind. Progress down the course was probably sped up by those with the skills to take advantage of it. Breanna came 4th in her heat of the Women's Under 16 K1 200m event in a time of 1:02:87 and progressed to the final where she placed 8th in an improved time of 1:01:33.

The Men's Over 55 K1 500m race saw 2 of our members compete in a direct final. Unfortunately Ian Castell-Brown had to race against men up to 20 years his junior as there were no other paddlers in the 75-80 year age group. Ian's effort during the day was acknowledged over the venue microphone but I believe he should have been declared the winner of his age group regardless of a lack of competitors. Ian applied his usual determination and effort to record a time of 3:00:21. John Preston overcame a poor start to come 3rd in a time of 2:26:02.

Madeline Chard beat women from older age groups taking out the Women's Over 35 K1 500m race in a time of 2:42:15. Madeline still represents us at events despite having moved up to the Central Coast over a year ago. Her husband Ross, now stationed in Darwin, made the trip down to witness Madeline's solid performance.

In the Men's Over 55 K1 200m direct final, Ian Castell-Brown performed well again, to record a time of 1:10:29. John Preston had a poor race missing strokes on at least 5 occasions and coming in 5th in 0:59:14.

The Women's Over 35 K1 200m direct final saw a repeat performance by Madeline Chard as she won in a time of 1:03:07. Madeline is now turning her thoughts to the Marathon Nationals in Ballarat next Easter.

Unfortunately the women don't get to race over 1000m because it is not an international distance for them. Luckily the men do get to race over 1000m and both of our competitors went well. Ian Castell-Brown came in 7th in a time of 5:57:32. John Preston redeemed himself a bit by coming 3rd in a much better display in a time of 4:54:87.

Sprint events in NSW are steadily gaining in popularity and it would be great to see more of our club members participating in these events. The timetable for events in 2014 is reproduced below and with a membership of over 300 we should be able to get more than 4 people attending.

Full results of the Sprint Championships are available at: <http://regattas.canoe.org.au/?regatta&file=293>

Photos from the event are available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/paddlensw-sprint/sets/>



2014/15 Sprint Season Program

- Sprint Series Round 1: Sun 24 Aug 2014
- Sprint Series Round 2: Sun 5 Oct 2014
- Sprint Series Round 3: Sun 2 Nov 2014
- Sprint Series Round 4: Sun 30 Nov 2014
- 2015 NSW Sprint Championships: Sat 17-Sun 18 Jan 2015

Up-coming events:

2014 Australian Canoe Marathon Championships

18 - 21 April 2014 at Ballarat

2014 Oceania Canoe Marathon Championships

The 2014 Oceania Canoe Marathon Championships are to be held on 5th and 6th April 2014 at Lake Karapiro, Cambridge, New Zealand.

2017 World Masters Games

The 2017 World Masters Games have been awarded to Auckland, New Zealand.

Other Future Events

2014 ICF World Canoe Marathon Championships - Oklahoma, USA

2015 Australian Canoe Marathon Championships – Tasmania

2015 Masters Games - Adelaide

2015 ICF World Canoe Marathon Championships - Gyor, Hungary
2016 Oceania and Australian Canoe Marathon Championships - New South Wales

2017 Australian Canoe Marathon Championships - Queensland



**Lake Wendouree
on a rough day:
weed cutting**

To Weed or Not to Weed?

**The hose is on the tap, the weed is
in the water**

Pictures courtesy: Russell Lutton

Or, on a nicer day:



Picture courtesy: Lizzie Tongway





Marathon Training Camp

23rd February 2014

Venue: Manly Warringah Kayak Club, Berry Reserve, Narrabeen
Sunday 10am-2pm 23rd February

Aims of the Training Camp: The PNSW marathon camp will be aimed at new and novice marathon paddlers focusing on paddling techniques, wash riding, basic race tactics, race preparation, hydration, and ergo technique.

The training camp is free of charge to paddlers with the preference given to paddlers from the Marathon 10 series 10km & 15km who are looking to increase their paddling potential in 2014.

Training provided by: The training camp will be presented by Chantal Minchin and Dr Suzie Edwards.

Chantal has competed in all levels of kayaking from an early age and has extensive expertise in coaching all disciplines. Bachelor of Applied Science (sports coaching and administration), Graduate Diploma of Education (PDHPE), Graduate Certificate (Physical Education), Dual Olympian, Olympic Medalist, 2 x K1 Bronze medalist World Marathon Kayak Championships.

Suzie has also had a significant kayaking and coaching career, is currently a lecturer of exercise science at Bathurst University and is studying and collecting on a biomechanics kayak research project at Macquarie University.

Requirements: Email pnswwmarathon@gmail.com by 1st February, 2014, to secure a spot (limited numbers)

The training camp is run by PaddleNSW Marathon Technical committee and is free of charge to paddlers.

Free parking Sundays at Berry Reserve car park or on Pittwater road.

Bring your kayak, paddle and paddle gear. Time permitting there will be on-water activity.

Shower and bathroom facilities at MWKC.

Narrabeen offers a range of café and lunch venues.



*Paddlers may wish to compete in MWKC Sunday club race at 8 a.m. – 10 or 12 km course

SUP Convener's Report: Jon Bell



The 2014 Naish Australia N1SCO tour dates are;

- The **RPS** NISCO tour stop #1, 23rd February, Melbourne.
- The **Wetspot** NISCO tour stop #2, 2nd March, Canberra.
- The **Red Bull** NISCO tour stop #3, 16th March, Sydney.
- The **ONBOARD WIND SUP** NISCO tour stop #4, 5th April, Adelaide.
- The **CS** NISCO tour stop #5, 27th April, Newcastle.
- The **WASURF** NISCO tour stop #6, 18th May, Safety Bay WA.
- The **Wet Surf** NISCO tour stop #7, 1st June, Maroochydore.
- The **ADRENALIN RUSH** NISCO tour stop #8, 20th July, Mackay.

N1SCO
powered by the **ONE 12'6"**

BGCC is supporting the Wetspot-sponsored 2014 Naish Australia N1SCO Tour event in Canberra on 2 March 2014.

NISCO competitions include long distance paddle-races but also add new and faster disciplines that are exciting to watch and compete in and are easy to understand and follow. The formats used in the Canberra race may include some of the following:

- **Sprint:** elimination over a 100m – 200m course
- **Intermediate:** elimination over a 400m – 600m course, with turns in both directions
- **Long:** approximately 10 km flat water or downwind course
- **Relay:** teams of 4 over the intermediate or sprint course (relay races can be for everyone – families, kids, clubs!)

And guess what? Naish supply the boards, so everybody is on the same type of board as shown in the picture.

Inflatable stand up paddle boards

So, inflatable SUP boards, are they the real deal or just a fad? Well the manufacturers seem to think there is a market, as all the main manufactures now have a range of inflatable boards suitable for flat water racing, surfing, down-winding, touring and even some for white water. The Naish Australia N1SCO Tour mentioned above uses inflatable boards provided by Naish. Some inflatable boards have been competitive against regular boards in competitions overseas. In addition, as you may have noticed there were a few inflatable boards used in the BGCC 24 hour race in 2013.

Who would buy one? Inflatables may suit some people but not others. I bought a rather big 265L touring board, so two people could go on it. In spite of that, it only weighs 14kg and fits into a back pack with room to spare for clothes. Last year, with a three piece adjustable paddle inside the back pack, I popped it in the cargo hold of a plane and took it with me to Tasmania for a week. Closer to home, over the summer we have had lots of fun at the south coast, giving our children, friends and cousins a taste of SUP surfing as shown in the pictures below. With the inflatable board the children really relaxed and had a lot of fun without the fear of being hit by a hard board in the waves. Surfing sessions took on an interesting dimension as the number of crew members increased. The crew inevitably turned pirate, mutinied, threw me overboard and then set out on various pirating adventures on the 'their' pirate ship.

For those without much storage or no roof racks, inflatable SUP boards may provide an option. As I have storage and racks, I tend to use my board as a 'deflatable' and only deflate it occasionally. In examining options, I came to the conclusion that the six inch thick boards are generally much stiffer and perform better than the 4 inch thick boards. Even though my board can be pumped up to 22 PSI, I use about 15 PSI and don't have any trouble with it flexing. The technology in the boards has improved greatly from 2 to 3 years ago when surfing an inflatable board was much like surfing a giant thong. The boards are pretty tough and most manufacturers have an option for a double thickness skin. The good quality inflatable boards appear to cost about the same or a bit less than good quality fibreglass or epoxy SUP boards. I think it will also be my board of choice for winter paddling in Canberra, as its six inch thickness together with the club's new pontoon, means I can paddle without getting my feet wet. I also recently used it for the club's role in assisting with water safety for triathlons and it proved to be very effective for rescues.



Been for a swim lately – accidentally or on purpose?

No seriously, how good is your swimming? If you lost your boat (SUP, canoe, ski or kayak) in open water 500m from land, could you get back?

Assisting with water safety for the half ironman race in Lake Burley Griffin late last year showed how people can get into difficulty in relatively benign conditions. It was quite a humbling experience to assist in the rescues of two people, both of whom were vastly superior athletes compared to me.

The lack of visual references, both under and above water when swimming in open water, makes it much more disorienting than pool swimming and may even lead to that sea-sick feeling. Currents, breaking waves, the increased likelihood of losing your boat in rough conditions and other impediments such as shoes, booties, a wetsuit or other clothing can make even a modest distance of a few hundred metres into quite a challenging swim. One of the other potential traps is that we tend to remember how well we could swim when we were 20. Swimming is definitely one of those things that if you don't use it, you can lose it.

So I decided to test my open water swimming, in the ocean, with some small swells, and a bit of chop. I was wearing typical paddling gear – t-shirt and shorts. While I managed a few hundred metres ok, that convinced me that I need to spend some more time in the water, rather than just on the water.

A final note for my fellow stand up paddlers. Those who have a surfing background will vouch for the leg rope being an essential part of your kit, but not a substitute for being able to get yourself back to shore without the board. Leg ropes can break at the most inopportune moments, such as in a thumping swell with raging rips, or during a blustering down-winder.

Other SUP activities

BGCC Club members on SUPs: Currently there are about 15 BGCC members involved with stand up paddling, most have their own board (or two or three in some cases). The 15 includes members who have come into BGCC as stand up paddlers, as well as existing BGCC members who have taken up stand up paddling. We are creating a BGCC SUP email list to keep members informed of SUP activities. If you would like to be on the list, please send an email to SUP@bgcc.org.au.

Sunday Social paddles: The popular High Country SUP informal social SUP paddle continues at 8 a.m. on Sundays from Molonglo Reach, coffee included.

New Boards: New boards on the water recently include: Lincoln's Fanatic 14', Steve's 12 6' NSP, Drew's Naish 14', Jo's 14' cocomat.

Canoe Polo Convener's Report: Rowan Holt

Since our last Blazing Paddles report two more Australian Canoe Polo Summer Series event have taken place with the club represented at both competitions. In December both an A and a B grade team played in Sydney at the Penrith White Water stadium. Although neither team gained a place in the top 3, all members played very well and gained welcome skills and competition experience.

Following the welcome disruption of Christmas and New Year, Angus Robb, Brenton Smith, Carley Goodwin and Mikey Young joined with other teams to participate at the Adelaide Australia Day competition. Prior to the competition, Mikey Young took part in the 2014 Australian Canoe Polo Development Camp. The camp is run and organized primarily by Angus Robb and the program is a much valued event for anyone wanting to improve their skills and knowledge of Canoe Polo.

Currently we are training for the 4th instalment of the Australian Canoe Polo Summer Series, which will be held in Nagambie, Victoria, on March 8 & 9. However, the major goal for our members at the moment is the 2014 Australian Canoe Polo National Championships.

The Nationals will be held in Canberra at Molonglo Reach over the Easter Long Weekend (April 19-21). This is a major event that is worth getting excited over. Current estimates are that around 150 athletes will be participating in the competition over the 3 days. The organizing committee are looking for volunteers to assist with time and score keeping, as well as marshalling at the event. It is the organizing committee's aim to deliver a highly professional and successful event that will assist the development of Canoe Polo in Canberra and Australia, as well as attracting new members and interest in the Burley Griffin Canoe Club.

To assist in the committee's endeavours it is hoped that the proposed acquisition of 4 pontoons from ACT Rowing will eventuate, providing the competition with a very professional look and the club with versatile and sturdy infrastructure to assist with flat water competitions and other club activities in the long run.

We are currently holding training nights including skill development on Mondays from 6 p.m. and Games nights on Wednesdays from 6 p.m. at Molonglo Reach.

Thanks for everyone's support of Canoe Polo and we look forward to a great year of paddling and promoting paddle sports in Canberra!

Canoe Polo National Development Camp: Angus Robb

As part of my role as the development director for Australian Canoe Polo, I ran the national development camp in Adelaide recently. Michael Young, who is also a member of BGCC, went to the camp as an athlete.

In the middle of January the National Canoe Polo Development Camp kicked off for three days of hard training in the warm summer weather. For this year's camp, 25 athletes from all over Australia descended on Adelaide to push their skills to new levels, all under the guidance of senior coaches.

The camp aimed to improve the skills of intermediate and developing athletes. It was an opportunity for those who wish to take the next step in the game and perhaps begin their journey to the elite level. The coaches were a mixture of past and present members of the Australian national teams (in addition to one coach from the New Zealand national women's team) and this gave the athletes a valuable source of information to draw on.

Each day had a number of skills sessions with the mornings and afternoons spent on the water and the evenings spent off-water. On the water the coaches took their athletes through kayak control, ball skills and tactical play. Later on in the evenings the athletes attended a seminar on sports nutrition and listened to past Australian women's team member Lauren Ljiljak talk about her experience at the 2013 World Games which was followed by three times World Champion Duncan Cochrane discussing goal setting.

As the high performance manager for Australian Canoe Polo and the parent of an athlete, Duncan Cochrane explained the value of the camp, saying: 'I believe The National Development camp is probably the most important act of development we have as it helps a large number of junior and youth players and potential coaches take their Canoe Polo to another level. Once again the coaches and organisers have done a fantastic job and my child has loved it and made a bunch of new friends from around the country as well. Congratulations AC Polo - keep up the good work!'

One highlight from this year's camp was *Totally Wild* from Channel 11 filming. This will give canoe polo in Australia some nation-wide publicity. A number of the junior athletes explained what the game involved and how it was played. The episode is due to air in around 10 weeks and notification of this will be made when the information is available.

Overall the camp was a success and it makes a valuable contribution to Australian Canoe Polo and its future. The 2015 camp will take place around the same time next year and will also be held in Adelaide. Keep an eye out for information about it from the usual sources.



**Michael Young (Nº 10)
showing the skills honed
at Molonglo Reach**

South Coast Convener's Report: Carolyn Williams

Our first time trial for 2014 gave us the opportunity to host visitors from Canberra – thanks Kieran, Beth, Scott and Paul for making the trip over the mountain to join us. The holiday boat traffic always creates challenges on the Clyde, but the measures we have taken to exclude the need to pass the boat ramp and to confine the course to the riverbank generally keep our paddlers out of harm's way. Results for the time trial are on the website.

Our second event was our annual - this was the second one, anyway - Australia Day Regatta, where we all made an effort to look as foolish as possible by donning patriotic garb and accoutrements. The photo proves how foolish some of us can actually be!

This year we added to the excitement by combining our dressing up with the Newhouse Criterion, an aptly named event being the brainchild of Allan Newhouse. Allan came up with a formula based on the criterion organised by the Wagga Bidgee Canoe Club, which Allan just happened to win at the M10 race weekend at Wagga last year! In Allan's own words, this is how it works:

I could calculate a handicap for each paddler for a single lap, based on their recent performance. After that single lap, a new handicap would be calculated and paddlers would complete another lap. That exercise would be repeated for a third lap.

Paddlers could have the option of doing only one lap or two instead of the three, but since there would be a bit of a delay between laps, I don't think there would be time for a fourth lap.

We could either just give every paddler 6 points or we could make it a bit more interesting by giving the winner of each heat and the overall winner (as long as it was someone who had not won a heat), 9 points.

Many thanks to Allan for putting together this idea and for making it happen. Allan was our timekeeper/handicapper/referee/complaints handler, and was ably assisted by Pam Ison and Steph Rake, who he said were indispensable. Something to remember for next time: you definitely need more than one person doing the timekeeping! As the handicaps were reworked after each lap the paddlers continued to finish closer and closer together causing mayhem on the bank. It definitely seemed easier being in a boat than holding the clipboard.





We had 13 boats taking part – it was great to have Ben and Gary revving us up as well as Malcolm Hall. Malcolm got us all excited about trying another form of handicapping where we all start together and when the leading paddler reaches the halfway point and turns for home the whole field turns around also. We'll be giving this a try soon and will report on its success.

Claire Ison, our only junior paddler of the day, was also the only paddler to improve their lap time each time. Claire did her first lap in the PNSW-supplied Minisonic and then switched to Allan's latest creation – a wooden child's K1 – and blitzed her first lap time. After great consideration, she chose to do her final lap in the wooden boat and again improved her time. The small K1 is the prototype for Allan's new K1 he is building for himself which he hopes will be ready for debut early in the marathon series.

Peteee Fane was the overall winner on the day, closely followed by Graeme Ison and Wayne Fanning, but the real winner was the success of the different format. Everyone had great fun – it was fierce competition chasing down the paddler/s in front and the break between laps was a terrific opportunity to catch your breath for the next lap – and to chat, of course!!! Thanks again, Allan.

On the club representational front, January saw Nick Ziv and Ian C-B taking part in the George Bass Marathon and the PNSW State Sprint Championships respectively. Well done to both gentlemen. A report on Nick's exploits can be found below.

Ocean Convener's Report: Stephen Bunney

Makai Cup February 8, Bendalong to Ulladulla 20 km – DOWNWIND

If you are looking for a taste of the divine that is downwind ocean paddling, start here. The Makai cup has the venue, the organization and the audacity to say no, no this race is going downwind regardless. Do the only sensible thing, grab your kit and get down there.

V10

A big thanks to Adam Hardy from Epic surf skis for giving me a ride on the new V10. Unfortunately the week Dave and Adam were down the ocean just wouldn't give us anything remotely downwind-ish. Which is a shame because the V10 pedigree has always been toward a true downwind type of boat.

So what did I think?

- ✓ Firstly I am 180cm tall, 88 kilograms heavy and very middle aged!
- ✓ I really like the seating geometry, though I found the seat not as snug as my Fenn elite. Epic has a seat side pad option to remedy this, so it shouldn't be an issue for ownership.
- ✓ Heaps more stable than my Fenn Elite, but still not a beginner's boat.
- ✓ Well built and finished.
- ✓ Nicely optioned and the scupper is fantastic.

I really enjoyed paddling it; the seating geometry and stability certainly encourages you to paddle correctly. The V10 hung on to the small waves rebounding from the cliffs and the odd small ocean swell easily. I have no doubt that it would hold boat wash just as easily. The V10 did seem more settled with a bigger paddler on it, but I say that cautiously as the sea was depressingly benign whilst Adam and Dave were down and the Ski never really had a chance to do what it was designed for.

If you were looking for a surf ski I would definitely recommend that you take one for a test ride. Epic has also released an updated version of the much beloved V10L and even though Epic suggests it's not for gentlemen of my (cough) weight, I'll certainly be taking one for a test ride anyway.

Training

If you yearn for downwind excellence, then I highly recommend a downwind specific coaching session. We are blessed in this country with the best, no exaggeration, the best downwind paddlers in the world. Probably even the Universe. And unbelievably guys like Clint Robinson and Dean Gardiner who have bloody won everything worth winning downwind on the ocean do downwind clinics. If your preferred coach races surf ski and is any good at it, ask them for a downwind session. Mad if you don't.

As you may know Nick Ziviani is a very private guy, but sorry Nick you don't do the George Bass and not get at least a tip of the Hat for the effort. The George Bass is 7 legs over 7 days for a total of 190 kilometres, from Batemans Bay to Eden. Nick trained extremely hard for this race and as luck would have it got a virus on the first day. I believe he finished 6th over all which was a huge effort. The Race was won by Michael Locke from Wollongong.

GEORGE BASS MARATHON 2013: Extra Notes Courtesy Russell Lutton

BGCC paddler Nick Ziviani, who hails from Dalmeny on the NSW south coast, recently completed the gruelling George Bass Marathon, placing a very credible sixth in the highly competitive surf ski category.

2014 was the 35th year the event has been run for surf boats, with the surf ski category being introduced in the 1990s. The marathon, billed as the toughest ocean race in the world, is a gruelling seven-day event from Batemans Bay to Eden, commencing on Saturday, 1 January and finishing on Sunday, 7 January.



Paddlers and rowers average about 25 km a day in the unpredictable NSW south coast weather conditions. In fact, this year the head winds and ocean conditions were so bad on the first day's Batemans Bay to Moruya leg that organisers turned the fleet around half way so they finished where they started. On the last day the direction of the race was changed to take into account the unkind weather conditions, and instead of finishing at Eden, the race started at Eden and finished at Pambula.

There is a lot of luck involved in training for and competing in ultra-marathon events. Unlike a weekly 10 km time trial, where if you feel ill or are injured, you can simply have another go next week, for a one-off ultra-marathon event you can train for months but if you are sick or injured at the time of the race, you have to make some difficult decisions about what to do after all that training commitment.



In this context, Nick's sixth place result is all the more outstanding. From day 1 through to the last day he was afflicted with a stomach virus that significantly degraded his performance. In fact, he became jokingly known among other competitors as 'the seagulls' friend'.

Nick is having a short break after the George Bass before he launches into training for his next major challenge in May – the 2014 Molokai Surf Ski World Championships in Hawaii. A BGCC paddler competing in the Molokai; wow! Hope the seagulls aren't following you in this event, Nick!

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Another Tale of the Sea

The Thousand Dollar Weekend: Craig Kentwell

At such times, under an abated sun; afloat all day upon smooth, slow heaving swells; seated in his boat, light as a birch canoe; and so sociably mixing with the soft waves themselves, that like hearth-stone cats they purr against the gunwale; these are the times of dreamy quietude, when beholding the tranquil beauty and brilliancy of the ocean's skin, one forgets the tiger heart that pants beneath it; and would not willingly remember, that this velvet paw but conceals a remorseless fang. (Chapter 114, "Moby Dick")

Herman Melville knew the sea well and his sage advice is well considered – the seas 'remorseless fang' can, and will strike at any opportunity. On my most recent foray onto the ocean she struck me – in the wallet - to the tune of \$1000.

My long time sea kayaking partner, Craig (always good, as you get older, to have friends with the same name as you – makes it easier to remember) and I had planned a simple three day foray on the South Coast. Yet another small addition to our eventual aim of paddling all the Sydney to Melbourne coast line.

On the first weekend of summer we set off from Mosquito Bay and planned on heading south towards Narooma with the first day comprising a straightforward cruise to Congo Beach – a simple 25 km with a stop at the Broulee Surf Club for coffee. The Saturday dawned with clear blue skies, a gentle northerly zephyr and swells up to 2m – perfect conditions! After a long absence from the sea kayak it was good to feel the heaving swells under the boat and to enjoy the majesty of the open water. Plodding along at about 6 km/hr in fully loaded boats all was bliss. The swell was large but not huge – just enough to make us reconsider landing at Broulee so we pushed on to the more sheltered northern side of Moruya South Headland. As we approached the Moruya River mouth a couple of ocean ski paddlers came out to say hello – at 500m I recognised the unique silhouette of Shane who was having some fun in the waves with Jason. Their 10kg skis looked a little more streamlined than our 60kg laden 580s!

After a quick lunch at Moruya we headed south looking for a good place to land and set up camp for the night. The Northern side of Congo looked good and the break seemed manageable so we lay off just outside the impact zone and watched for the pattern then made our approach to the beach. Craig caught a nice little 1m wave and I followed on the next but got broached – managed a quick low brace but didn't lean in to the wave enough and got knocked over. Floating upside down in the surf I remembered Knobby's rolling advice and somehow managed to pull off a roll and come up the right way just in time to softly kiss the sand. Feeling



very chuffed to have pulled off a combat roll I failed to notice the first unexpected expense of the weekend. My old kayaking hat – a veteran of many trips had been rudely torn from my head and was now “lost at sea”. New Hat Cost = \$20. Cumulative total = \$20.

We found a great spot in the dunes and proceeded to set up camp for the night. All going to plan until – snap – one of my tent poles broke. That old tent has been with me for over 25 years and has sheltered me on five different continents, so it was with some sadness that I gaffer taped the poles together and added another expense to the weekend. Replacement Poles Cost = \$80. Cumulative Total = \$100. A cheeky little Shiraz and a Thai Beef Curry made the world feel good once again.

Sunday morning bought with it blue skies but a bigger swell and stronger breeze. After a hearty breakfast we pushed off from the beach and turned right yet again – this time unfurling our sails and making good speed. Thoughts of a brief excursion up the Tuross River were dashed when we saw the size of the break across the bar at the river mouth, so we continued south for a rest and snack at Potato Point. The map showed a small boat ramp on the northern side of the headland so we tentatively nosed in towards the shore. The SW swell and NE wind combined to make some very confused water on the approach to the ramp. I managed to weave my way in and landed safely. After getting out of the boat I turned to check on Craig only to see him furiously swimming his boat away from the rocks after capsizing. Fortunately there was a strong rip taking him out to sea so he stayed calm and waited till he'd been washed a hundred metres off the rocks then executed an unorthodox but successful paddle float re-entry. Meanwhile I'd grabbed my camera to record what could have possibly been Craig's last sighting only to find that my supposedly water and sand proof camera had succumbed to the elements. Camera Cost = \$400. Cumulative total = \$500.

After a quick drink and a bite to eat we pushed off again through the lumpy water off the boat ramp and continued South in a building swell. Our plan was to head for Dalmeny then into Lake Mummuga and a quiet night camped along the lake shore. After the close call at Potato Point we decided that entering the lake at Dalmeny might be a bit dodgy – neither of us knew the entrance and we weren't prepared to take the risk so we looked for a safe spot to land on Brou Beach a couple of kilometres North of the lake entrance. By now the swell was really building up and the wind was howling.



The sea was angry that day, my friends - like an old man trying to send back soup in a deli.

Brou Beach is a long (6.5 km) beach that has a continuous attached bar that's cut by rips every 200 -300 metres. We paddled around a bit and found what looked like a calmer section of the break with a small protected flat grassy section for our tents at the base of the dunes. Perfect. After the obligatory 10 minutes watching the surf conditions we decided it was do-able and made a well-timed dash through the impact zone. Craig went first and got picked up by a goodly sized wave and broached but managed to pull off a textbook high brace and bounced safely ashore. No such luck for this little black duck. I got picked up by the next wave and broached straight away, I braced and was getting ready for a bouncy sideways ride in when the boat turned perpendicular to the wave and the bow dived in and I pitch poled. Still hanging upside down I tried for a repeat of yesterday's roll but couldn't quite get around in the turbulent foam so I hit the eject button and pushed out. Still some way from the shore I got bounced and smashed around by the waves and totally lost sight of my boat – next time I saw it she was bearing down on me from above so I quickly ducked under the water logged behemoth as it careened towards the sand. Finally after having been through the spin cycle my feet hit terra firma and I waddled ashore and made a dash for my boat which had washed up about 50 metres away. I got there just in time to see my paddle float being washed out to sea. Paddle Float Cost = \$60. Cumulative total = \$560. Got hit by another wave and flattened then up again only to see my rear hatch cover ripped off and sucked out to sea. This time, with panther like reflexes, I dived and managed to grab it before it too disappeared. All good. Turned around to go and drag the boat to safety and then noticed that my sail had been torn and one of the sail poles snapped in two during the pounding in the surf. New Sail Cost = \$420. Cumulative Total = \$980.

After having dragged the boat and my battered carcass to higher ground I caught up with Craig (who was still laughing uncontrollably at my misadventure). He'd somehow befriended a couple of characters on the beach who looked like a cross between Chad Morgan (google him kiddies) and rejects from Deliverance central casting. They too had a good laugh at my performance then disappeared as mysteriously as they had appeared before returning 10 minutes later with a couple of ice-cold beers ☺.

With the sun beating down, we hastily fashioned a shelter out of a tent fly, polished off our free beers and settled in for an afternoon siesta. Woke up in time for pre-dinner drinks and all was going well until Craig tried to re-arrange our little hovel and ripped a bloody great hole in my ground sheet. New Ground Sheet Cost = \$10. Cumulative Total = \$990.

Monday morning and the seas had abated somewhat, the wind had dropped entirely and all looked good for a launch and a quick run down to Narooma. With my bruised ego and tattered nerves Craig kindly suggested that he'd help me launch so I could get through the shore break quickly. Waiting, waiting, waiting, break in the sets so go, go, go. I powered away from the beach and was looking good till a rogue wave reared up at the back of the impact zone – I summoned up my inner Clint Robinson and sprinted to make it over. Just as it started to curl I hit the face and my old faithful Mirage burst through and out onto the other side and to safety. Crisis averted.

Allowing myself a couple of seconds to recover my calm I paddled a few more metres and turned around to watch Craig's launch. But instead of the sight of his boat cresting the waves I found myself face to face with a two meter Bronze Whaler slowly circling just meters away – its dorsal fin slicing through the now smooth water and cruising menacingly between me and Craig who had successfully negotiated the surf but was mysteriously now heading North instead of South. With casual disregard for the man eater lurking only meters away I set off for Craig who, some 200m to my North was signalling with his paddle for me to "raft up".

Poor little darling had lost a shackle pin from his rudder cable and was now rudderless and paddling round in circles. Trying to keep my hands out of the water as much as possible, I disconnected his rudder, gave him some friendly tips on hip steering and we set off on the last short leg of our journey and left our grey suited friend behind. A quick hour or so and we slipped through the unusually benign Narooma Bar, came to rest on the banks of Wagonga Inlet, phoned my good wife to arrange a pick up and put on a brew. As a final twist I gathered up my old faithful plastic mug that I bought in 1981 and prepared for a satiating Earl Grey only to discover a hairline crack peeking out through the burnt orange patina. Oh the injustice! New Mug Cost \$10 – Cumulative total = \$1000.

And – I'd do it all again tomorrow, for, as Russell oft reminds us...Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing - absolutely nothing - half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats.

Social Convenor's Report: Paul Hartlipp

The touring wing of the BGCC is planning a trip for Canberra weekend March 8, 9, and 10. We will be spending the weekend at Merimbula. While the touring group paddles around the various waterways, everyone else is invited to spend time pursuing information about their own specialties. If there is sufficient interest I would like to get specialists in some of the various disciplines found in our club to provide assistance. The plan is to give people the opportunity to gather in groups around SUP, flatwater, ocean kayaking and touring so that we can share information and experience in these disciplines.

Please contact me (paul.hartlipp@gmail.com) if you are interested.

I intend to help match groups for accommodation. So, if someone is renting a house or apartment I will attempt to help find people to fill unused spaces.

When you contact me please indicate your interests. If there is enough interest I will try to get some extra craft so that people may try new craft. Please note this is the last weekend leading up to the BGCC PaddleNSW race. If someone wants to paddle an ICF K-1 or K-2 this would be a great opportunity to give one of these craft a last minute try. Please note, in general older K-2's are relatively stable and easy to portage as they are carried one paddler on each end. Let me repeat: if there is interest the club will work together in an effort to provide people the opportunity to paddle these boats.



Why not try to learn to roll in safe conditions - rather than wait for this to happen!

Tales from the 2013 Murray Marathon



An Achievement: Kiaran Lomas

It was about June when I was laid up in hospital, on heavy drugs for back spasms, that I decided to enter the Murray River Marathon on a SUP. OK I had it in my mind before that, but that was when I entered.

The logistics of the event then began. Firstly, finding the appropriate board. I knew from experience that on a 14' board it was going to be difficult to make the time cut-offs. The previous year as part of a team, we were less than an hour off some of the cut-offs at the end of the day. I needed something that would run. I recalled Dale Chapman mentioning he had a board that would suit me for the Murray River Marathon, so I laid down some cash and the board showed up. Well, all but the fin/rudder. First hurdle was to find a fin. An old Epic ski rudder did the trick.

Now, this was to be my 7th Murray, with the first 5 being from 1988-92. The last couple of those years I was ably supported by my Ground Crew, and later best man, Andrew Silk. So if I was coming out of retirement for a solo effort, I decided he should as well. After a few calls it was all lined up. Preparation consisted of the marathon series, 24hour Challenge and lots of time on the water. I had planned on doing the Hawkesbury as well but an injury saw me off the water for 6 weeks.

The first day of the race was going to be the litmus test, determining how much effort was going to be required. I had based my time estimates on about 7.0 km per hour with a small push from the river, taking me to about 9 km per hour. What became obvious from these sums: no time could be allocated to sitting at a checkpoint eating and drinking. So the strategy was to get food and water on the board at the checkpoint and wait till I had the wind at my back to eat. This worked well and surprised many other competitors as the Mad Solo SUP Paddler just didn't stop. The first day also identified another problem. I had organised a pair of Vibrams (the shoes like gloves for your toes) to wear on my feet. As the day went on my feet started to swell and the pressure on the toes became unbearable. While I grinned and bore it for the first day, fortunately before the race Danielle Winslow had suggested I should take a larger pair of shoes for night times. Instead, these became the shoes that I wore every day, which were much more comfortable. The other problem was the heat. I had planned to just jump off the board and soak to cool down. However, 70 km into day one I tried this and my whole body started cramping. I was actually concerned as to whether I'd be able to get back on the board. So this option for cooling was no longer viable. Instead I resorted to paddling close to the camp sites and getting the campers to splash water on me all the way down. By the end of the first day I had learnt a lot but also found my predicted speed was about 8 km rather than 7 km per hour. This meant I had blown my time estimates about and put myself into third place on handicap.

Day two was cancelled due to an extreme fire warning. For me, I think the race may have been problematic as the winds were up to 50 km per hour and would have been mainly head winds. I seriously doubt if I would have made all the cut-offs. So as disappointed as I was, I think my body was very happy to be getting a day of rest.

Day three was hell. This section of river is notorious for not having much flow. It was also the day I recorded my fastest average times. Keeping pace with the C1s and TC2s I went hard all day to finish the day in second place on handicap by about 14 seconds. But probably the biggest part of this day was the growing support for the Mad SUPer. Every check point I paddled through I was greeted with cheers and encouragement. This was to continue through to the finish of the marathon. At the end of this leg I was physically shattered. When I got off the water I was kidnapped by a ladies' TK2 Team, who took me into their care and had their massage therapist perform miracles and set me up for another day. Team ShamPain as they were known became a great deal of support for the rest of the race down the river. Probably the only other incident of this day was the lost checkpoint. I had been going so hard, I had no recollection of going through checkpoint Bravo. I did, I got my water and food resupply, but I don't recall any of it. I was just going through the motions. Only when I asked another paddler how far it was to Bravo and he told me it was about 20 km up-stream that I came back to my senses.

Due to the course changes, Day Four was the first time we paddled into Swan Hill. And given the day I had before, I was wrecked. This was probably the hardest day to keep moving as the body had had enough. The kilometres seemed to drag on and the end seemed to be so far away. It was due to the efforts of Andrew and the encouragement from all on the bank, that I was able to continue to the finish. The only other excitement was a small black snake which swam beside me for a bit. I think the floating island the board offered was looking very attractive. The snake came within about 3m of the board, but was never really chasing me, just showing interest as I went past. I had dropped a place on handicap and was now only 2 seconds ahead of fourth.

With feelings of *deja vu* we trekked to the start of another run into Swan Hill. A slight hiccup at the start resulted



in me starting 5 minutes behind the field. Playing catch up made sure I had a continual stream of paddlers to catch. The first three checkpoints seemed to pass very quickly. The wind wasn't as much of a problem as it had been all week which probably made the last day far more pleasant. But the feeling you get when coming into the last finish line never disappoints. You've completed something that many people wouldn't even think of trying. To be the first to achieve it on a SUP is an even bigger thrill and the reception I received arriving at Swan Hill for the last time, was amazing. It put into perspective just how big an achievement it was.

We all know that there are many changes for the Murray River Marathon in a last effort to make it a viable activity. In past years there were more boats starting the Open K1 than there was paddlers completing the event solo this year. I'm not sure these glory days can be recaptured. But there are far more people competing just to complete the event as a team. I think the days of racing the Murray River Marathon may be coming to an end, but there is a new attraction for the event. I could be wrong but I feel that the BGCC should tap into this as an organised recreational paddle for our touring paddlers. Make it a social event with camp sites, sufficient support and a stimulating atmosphere with whom to share your paddling so the MRM can be revitalised.

An Alcohol Adventure: Tom Hick

Because he knew I was going, the editor will be chasing me for a story so I thought I'd get in early with the truth rather than have it made up based on rumour, innuendo and gossip.

There are a minimum of 2 versions of every story, the tellers and with a couple of witnesses you've a couple more versions. Because I'm a technophobe, there are no photos – half the time, I can't even find my mobile phone so a camera is a stretch too far for me.

I'd wanted to do a Murray Marathon for many years and in 2005 when I got back from the States, I got the guys together and we drove down to Picnic Point where we watched a day's finish, stayed the night and then watched the start again the next morning. On the way home via Rutherglen I bought Wendy 20 Litres of Muscat and a really nice Oak Barrel to let it rest in. She was somewhat underwhelmed with the gift but nevertheless, she used the Muscat for cooking.

Fast forward to 2007 and I was in my favourite local store admiring a new Epic V10 when the purveyor invited me to go for a test paddle. Not quite the debacle I had feared but, it was way too much boat for your average intelligent fat middle aged person so naturally I bought one and set about learning to paddle it. By the time the Hawkesbury came around in 2008 I could balance in it most of the time so I thought in for penny in for a pound and off I went. On the back of that, it was assumed that I had some idea about paddling and was roped into a team to do the 24Hr where the truth was made glaringly apparent.

So there I was in November 2008, a boat only just 12 months old and me barely capable of piloting it, when suddenly the Oak Barrel ran dry. Now that Muscat was an essential ingredient in our recipes. This was a very serious calamity. Another trip to Rutherglen was obviously required. I rang around and explained my predicament to the guys and they agreed to help. Again we went to Rutherglen and I bought 20 Litres of Muscat which this time was well received on my return. While we were there, I threw the boat on the River and learnt a bit more about longer distance paddling.

By 2009 I'd joined the Club and was regularly paddling the time trials, getting some serious heavy-duty assistance with my paddling and the Muscat was being used in more recipes. Either that or it was spontaneously evaporating from inside the Oak Barrel. So once more I organised the guys to do a trip to Rutherglen to buy 20 Litres of Muscat and while I was there do a bit of paddling.

Come early 2010 it was clear that I was going back to the States so my paddling and Muscat-buying activities were pretty much curtailed. I briefly returned to Australia and with much encouragement from 'it's all downhill there won't be any problems' Bob, I was signed up for the 2011 Hawkesbury – thanks Bob. I then pretty much dropped out of sight before reappearing early in 2013. There I was back in Australia with no distraction or so I hoped. This was to be my year of paddling and everything else would be incidental, (including being an enthusiastic secretary for the club: Editor's Note). Yeah wishful thinking! Unfortunately aspects of life intervened and it was the 24Hr before I knew it or had done any real paddling.

'It's all downhill' Bob suggested the Murray would be good for me and before I knew it, I was again ringing the guys and arranging a trip to Rutherglen. So we met up with Kiaran who is now famous for being the first and only person to ever have done a solo Murray Marathon on a SUP. I paddled along the river somewhere behind him and while I already knew you couldn't over-prepare for the Murray, got a lesson in what under-preparing was probably like. At Rutherglen I got a rush of blood to the head and thought if 1 Oak Barrel and 20 Litres was underwhelming then 2 Oak Barrels and 40 Litres would probably do the trick – Wendy wasn't exactly excited but I could tell that she was glad that I had done it.

That folks is the true story of how come I now have 3 Oak Barrels and hopefully enough cooking fluids so that I won't ever have to paddle another Murray Marathon.

Sue Reid and the Red Murray Hurriers

Marathon taster events don't get much better than the 2013 MRM, which even at a half-marathon distance dwarfs occasional dam paddles. There are PBs at every river bend and a great opportunity to take in the Murray River, escape the nation's capital and enjoy the friendships. As a two-person relay team, the Red Murray Hurriers took turns paddling different legs of the marathon using Anne's Horizon Flyer: MRM boat number 101. Anne, (motivating relay buddy), Jane and Rusty the spotted dog (support crew), all made the event possible, easy and lots of fun. Each day finished with entertaining sundowners amongst cockatoos, ibis and corellas. Asked what she thought about while paddling, Anne replied that for the most part she counted strokes. By way of contrast to that portrait of focus, the following journal entries offer a more desultory approach, with scenic glimpses of the grand river and a new term: river doughnut.

Day 1: Sandy beach departure for Anne who is first up on this eventful day. Rusty is very popular with the school students and oversees boats and swimmers. At the pop of the starter gun Anne and Rusty race off - one down the river and the other to the car. Anne arrives at Checkpoint Charlie much earlier than expected, catching Jane and me by surprise. After a quick change over, I set off into the high noon heat, cowboy hat pulled down for some serious paddling business. First I have to pick my way through pods of semi-amphibious Victorian river waders: "Watch out kid!" I yell, as a boy breaches in front of me, miraculously not noticing a 5 metre red kayak. To another: "Not the pump action, ok!" Widening and deepening, the river takes on a carnival atmosphere: pub-sized houseboats festooned with Aussie flags, motor - boats and massive jet skis tethered for the marathon and busting to burn up some fuel. Encouragement yelled from houseboats, jetty or beach: "Keep Goin' / Lookin' good / Keep paddling (lady, cowboy, red, 101)"

Leave the carnival behind for thickening bush punctuated by less outlandish caravans and motor homes. Sound amplifies wherever the river's banks are at their highest. Crackpshhh... a beer can opens, echoing against the opposite steep dry banks ruptured by tree roots stretching thirstily back to the water. Paddle toward the scene thinking it would be a great photo. Boat balance skills are tested whilst extracting the camera from my pocket. Now going backward with paddle under one arm, I point the camera then see how far away from my subject I have drifted. Decide against paddling back against the current, put camera readily accessible between legs and turn the boat around; first river doughnut. Bit hot now. Paddling in the midday sun like this, we're all nuts! Concentrate on stroke, deeper, arms higher two three, hot, hot, hot. Imagine my skin cells bubbling as another kayaking superhero glides by. Picking up my pace again I see another great shot and paddle toward it, repeating the same wobbly camera manoeuvres; another river doughnut. This routine risks a night time finish, so one power boosting banana later, I assume a business-like approach to the last 8 km, relieved to see the checkpoint flags and gang of three there at the finish.

Day 2: Display public concern that this leg had to be cancelled due to fire danger. Feel private glee as I return to default sloth mode on couch with delicious whale book and cake, luxuriating in nice cool house.

Day 3: Cake activity and sloth inactivity (now no longer private) provide impetus for today's more ambitious distance. On this heroic day in pursuit of glory, super oarswoman Anne is to head off first. Rusty finds the starter gun a little vulgar and is more comfortable in her car. Team carry the boat down a steep bank, negotiating deep mud and a large ripe fish head making the air heavy; collective gills start feeling a little greenish. Strategic pivot and balancing action by Anne as she slips into the boat with low-level mud impact. She quickly sets off and in a blink is there at the next checkpoint where it is my turn to dislodge from a metre of squelchy mud and jump in.

Feeling stealthy, I join a short train of two other wash-riding boats. Difficult to look around though so I broke away after about 4 km. The steep banks continue as the river twists and bends through arid farmland. Occasionally a beautiful soft breeze sweeps through the midday heat. Gorgeous river red gums and mallee trees along the banks provide lush shade for the cockatoos and corellas. Massive irrigation pipes every few kilometres, some clearly active while others appear to be just holding their ground. An agri-thriller plot starts taking shape... wondering how much termite could be stashed in a paddle shaft. Snapped out of my reverie, as a bloke yells, "Don't slow down now!" It's Tom.

Day 4: Queasy stomach this morning, probably too much cake. I twist out of my muddy trap into the boat. The seat feels softer, comfier than usual, so I jiggle around a bit to get snug. A banana previously thrown into the seat isn't happy. More wobbling as I try to extract the now flattened banana without falling into mud and muddy water. It squelches around the elastic as I tuck it into the straps on bow. Though the water smells a bit swampy, the air is deliciously cool and fresh. For this stretch at least, the Murray feels lush. Cockatoos are lively on both sides of the river. At a 'T' like bend I veer right with the current and here the banks start to smell like the loo end of too many sheep and cows. Pretty sure that was the right way to go. Lots of tinnies around cause quite a bit of large wash. I wonder whether the organisers have been down this way yet. Still no other kayaks zooming past me, which is a bit odd as I'm not known for speed. I squint through the glare at the sun rising higher and higher; faint sound of banjos. I must have been paddling for about 2 hours and still no other kayaks, just all these motorboats. Looking for answers I consult the banana, now blackened and exhausted by heat and my regrettable abuse. I can't have gone the wrong way... or have I? Enquiry to passing tinnie "This way to Swan Hill right?" "Yep, only about 10 km away." 10 km? That can't be right... or could it?" The river is certainly narrow here. Did I miss a significant turn and end up down a creek ... No, surely not. I squint up again, has it been 3 hours already? Another tinnie, "Seen any other kayaks?" Shaking his head the driver waves and powers off. Starting to feel hot, fumble around for the water bag, take a few gulps; better start rationing the water. Over on the shady bank a sheep sits with legs neatly tucked underneath, gazing quietly over the river surface. Holding up the water bag for the sheep to see and miming being on the phone "Tell the rescue boats I have enough water for 3 more hours." Sheep winks. Hopeless. Thinking portage options and starting to see things: giant cod. More big agriculture pumps appear. I eat the warm and pulpy banana and as I do a cheery voice yells, "Bet tons of those get eaten on the Murray!" Chin shiny with banana juice, I let out an over jolly laugh, relieved to see another kayak heading in the same direction

Day 5: Regular marathon contestants, The Blues and Brothers relay team are here and a small crescent of older kids from their team gathers on the bank above one of the boat launching spots. One of the kids has a guitar and they all join him in a beautiful interpretation of Archie Roach's "Took the Children Away". The organiser delegates megaphone activity to the youngest boy now broadcasting encouragement to the paddlers as they whip around the bend, "Number 43, just around the corner now!" and for the doubles, the crowd pleaser "Synchronise Number 107!"

We carry the boat down steep banks, balancing on tree roots to avoid thick body grabbing mud. It's a PB wonder day for sure and once Anne climbs in she sets off quickly again to complete her final leg. At the last changeover for our team, I shape a mental picture of glory, check seat, check banana then I'm off. Pushing myself a bit I arrive at Swan Hill in good time. I am awed to see Kieran about 1 km from the finish, still upright on his board and digging determinedly at the water. He gets a super cheer from the crowd as he arrives. I let the crowd's cheering draw me up to the finish as well and feel a big yahoo for our team's paddle, PBs and good times. Thinking now about which river to try next. (Editor's Note: Only nine months to the Hawkesbury Classic!.)

WARNING: BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION AHEAD!

With the bridge construction at the eastern end of Molonglo Reach at a critical stage, the club has been warned that 'the full force of the law' will be applied to any paddlers who venture past the first bridge, at any time day or night. Because of the heavy machinery being used to insert piles in the river, the area is potentially dangerous to anyone on the water and the surrounding river shore. Could all club members please heed this warning: if you come to the yellow buoy past the first bridge you have gone too far. The section of the river past the two, soon-to-be three bridges is also out of bounds to paddlers as it is again being used by water skiers.

Boat Bookings and Repairs

Due to the rapid rise in membership and the continually increasing demand for the use of club boats, BGCC is changing the procedures by which boats are booked and advice submitted about repairs needed on boats.

1. The use of the whiteboard in the shed for bookings and advice about damage to boats is now terminated. No more bookings or damage advice will be recorded on the whiteboard.
2. All bookings, whether for club courses and other events, and individual use MUST be done by e-mail request to the Boat Captain. Only after the request has been confirmed should it be assumed that the boat is available.
3. A request must be made at least ONE WEEK prior to the date on which the boat is required.
4. Once approved the Boat Captain will enter the request in the appropriate format, which will be available on the Club website and in a hard copy at the shed.
5. Before anyone takes a boat for use, (s)he is to check the web site and the shed to see if the boat is already booked.
6. Priority for bookings will be given to the course instructors, assistants and others who are conducting courses, so as to ensure that there are sufficient suitable boats available for beginners, juniors and others participating in courses.
7. Anyone using a club boat, whether instructors, assistants and other volunteer club members, or any other club member is asked to advise the Boat Captain or Deputy Boat Captain by e-mail of any faults found with a boat they have used. Damage, faults etc. are no longer to be written on the whiteboard.
8. The skis, V8s and V10, are consistently damaged through misuse and inappropriate storage. Two especially destructive practices are not lifting the boats up above the racks as they are placed away, so that the venturis hit the racks, and putting the skis the wrong way into the racks, rudder or stern first. Running boats up on to the beach, dragging boats out of the water rather than lifting them, and placing boats on the two stands near the beach where they can be blown off by the wind are also inadvisable because of the damage which can be caused. If a boat is too heavy or awkward for anyone to lift or store: ask for assistance.
9. While club boats are often handled carefully and returned undamaged, this is not always the case. In future, Blazing Paddles will carry statements about costs incurred on boat repairs to advise club members of this recurrent expenditure. **The assistance of club members in keeping repair costs down will benefit all of us.**

New Boats on the River

Richard Fox: SLR 1 (Sladecraft Long Rec single)

So why a Long Rec and not a ski or K1?

I wanted a boat that I could confidently paddle out on the open lake in most conditions. I really admire paddlers in tippier boats that do this with apparent ease. Not me. I struggle with balance in narrow boats and while I know it is a skill that I can master, enjoyment and feelings of decent exercise are compromised, so I made the decision to go with a more stable but still pretty quick craft. Comfort was another significant factor, especially in distances of 20 km and more. My bum and hips have taken a hammering in my Horizon Rocket to the point that I've not always been able to train on water, so space in the cockpit works well for me.

Boat specifications?

This is one of the first SLR1s to come out of the mould. The only two boats already seen in circulation (owned by Mick Carroll and Craig Dodd from the Central Coast) are proto-types. The boat is a carbon layup and weighs 13.7 kg. It's a 'big arsed boat' and therefore has very good primary stability. Its' secondary stability is not as apparent as the Rocket or Timetraveller. It is certainly a more expensive craft: 4k.

Has it lived up to expectations?

I expected the boat to perform as well or better than my Rocket and Timetraveller before it. I'm a better technical paddler now than 2011 when I owned the Timetraveller so a comparison is difficult. It is very comparable in speed to the Rocket - possibly a fraction slower, but this is countered by it being much quicker and more manoeuvrable in the turn. I took possession of the SLR1 in November when I started my hiatus from rigorous training. I simply need an off-season to do other things and give the mind and body a break. Consequently, I was paddling at a cruising speed of 11.2 kph in the new boat when I did venture out and this disappointed me. My mind is clearer now and my motivation to compete is returning and my cruising speed in the river is around 11.6 kph, which is much more what I was hoping for. Who knows, if I finally paddle with fully extended arms past the catch point I might even improve on this!



If anyone found a Garmin 310XT (orange and silver large wrist GPS), after the time trials on Wednesday 5th February, please let me know.

My mobile is 0478 300 176. (Richard)

Boat Insurance: Kirsten Nicole (Kit)

What would you do if your kayak/canoe/ski/SUP was damaged in an incident? Or worse, what if your pride and joy was damaged beyond repair and you had to replace it?

I was in a TK2 at Manly Warringah Kayak Club just before a marathon race when we were T-Boned by another K2 paddling a little too fast through the paddlers waiting for their start and not paying attention. I did not own the boat and luckily there was no severe damage. Had there been any damage and I did own it, my contents insurance would have excluded it.

Specifically, my contents insurance with GIO will not cover “sporting, recreational and leisure goods and equipment WHILST IN USE, but we will cover bicycles whiles in use, but not whilst being used for RACING OR PACE-MAKING”.

Why do I mention this you ask? Because this is an industry standard clause. Most home and contents insurers do not cover your sporting equipment whilst in use. You may also find that your Insurer has a length limit and as we know, K1's are quite long at 5.2m. Ski's and K2's are generally longer.

Allianz, Suncorp and NRMA all have the “in use” exclusion and you will find plenty of other Insurers do as well. Another issue is, if your vessel is damaged or stolen outside the safety of your shed/garage/backyard, are you insured? My portable valuables cover is limited to \$1,000 per item, which would not replace my K1. And it would still have to not be in use.

I originally obtained the cover four years ago as I stored my K1 in the club boat shed. I also took the kayak overnight to some races and left it tied on top of the car for anyone to admire. This meant that my kayak was completely excluded from my home and contents insurance as it was not a temporary removal, it was a permanent removal. If the K1 was damaged or stolen, I would be out of pocket \$2,000.

The point of this article is to refresh everyone's memory that PaddleNSW did the hard work for us a few years ago and have a partnership with OAMPS Insurance Brokers. By looking on the PaddleNSW website, you will note under the insurance tab that cover can be obtained for your vessel up to a limit of \$6,000, enough to cover most of our vessels. They will cover vessels over this value, but you need to contact them directly for quotes. You are required to be a financial member of PNSW to take advantage of this cover but most of us already are.

The coverage offered includes Accidental Damage, Malicious Damage, Theft, Whilst Racing, Training and Private Use, Whilst in Transit and Whilst in Storage.

The annual premium for the insurance is under the general policy information on PaddleNSW website, but to give you an idea a \$2,000 vessel will set you back \$99.40 a year and a \$4,000 vessel will set you back \$165.80 a year. They insure for Market Value. This is not new for old. If your vessel would have only sold for \$400 immediately before the charter boat demolished it, then you will only get \$150. There is a \$250 excess on the policy.



Not everyone will want or need the cover and some are happy to self-insure, but if you're worried about what you would do without a boat, it's something to consider.