



Newsletter of the

BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB

Volume 30, Issue 2, Dec 2019

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In this issue:

- 24 Hour Race Report and Race History
- Canoe Polo Invitational report
- Paddling in Smoke - safety article & Margi's Coaches Corner
- Farewell to RussL and Caro!



*The ACT Government assists this organisation
through Active Canberra, ACT*



Contents

President's Report: Jeremy Cook	4
BGCC 24 Hour Relay – Sponsorship Gratitude	5
Lake Burley Griffin Water Level Update: National Capital Authority	6
Smoke and Health and Safety Update: Margi Bohm	7
Coaches Corner: Margi Bohm	12
Clean Up Lake Burley Griffin Day	13
BGCC Canoe Polo Invitational report: Laura Kleinrahm.	14
24Hr Paddling Challenge: The Helpers.....	15
Helen's History of the 24 Hour Paddling Challenge	16
Farewell to RussL and Caro	25

Coming Events:



Paddle NSW 2020
Marathon Series

All paddlers welcome! Options 5km-20km.

1 Feb 2020	Batemans Bay Paddle Challenge
22-23 Feb 2020	Frank Harrison Races, Albury
29 Feb 2020	R1: Portage Round, Canberra
21 Mar 2020	R2, J1: PNSW Singles Championship, Windsor
5 April 2020	R3: PNSW Doubles Championship, Lane Cove
17-19 Apr 2020	National Marathon Championships, Geelong VIC
3 May 2020	R4, J2: Narrabeen
17 May 2020	R5: Tacoma
31 May 2020	R6: Davistown
21 Jun 2020	R7, J3: Penrith
25 Jul 2020	R8, J4: Woronora
8 Aug 2020	R9, J5: Grays Point
29 Aug 2020	R10 & Presentation Dinner: Burrill Lake

R# = Main Series Race J# = Junior Series Race

Entries at
www.webscorer.com/PaddleNSW

President's Report: Jeremy Cook

Welcome to the many new faces who have been appearing around the boatshed and river with the coming of spring and summer. And thank you to our coaches and others who have been inducting, familiarising and generally showing people the joys of paddling.

The BGCC 24 Hour Challenge event took some organising - special thanks to the many club members who pitched in - but was very worthwhile. Paddler numbers basically trebled from last year and the vibe was so much better as a result. The downside was the 10 hour 'hole' from 8pm to 6am when we were forced off the water by smoke and ash. The upside was the amazing paddling on Sunday morning by rested paddlers. The camaraderie of the relay teams was excellent and I'd recommend you put the 2020 event on your 'to do' list. It's called the 24 Hour Challenge, not the 24 Hour Race, and it's a challenge that's worth a try.

Putting on my club-community hat, I'd just like to touch on something that should concern all of us - the handling and treatment of club boats. Kayaks and skis are long, heavy and cumbersome. The boatshed has posts and doors that can 'get in the way', even though they're fixed (not moving) obstacles. Please be very aware not to crash boats, particularly the bows and sterns, into anything - including the boat below when you're taking one out of the rack. Make sure you find the balance point, make sure you visualise the obstacles around you, and make sure you ask someone for a hand (or a demo of what to do) if you're not confident getting boats in and out of the shed.

When a boat is down on the beach there are a few things to remember:

abrasion - where possible put boats on the grass, rather than the sand.

rudders - if a boat has an underslung rudder DO NOT sit on/in it whilst on land - e.g. to adjust the leg length - do it on the water. This is best practice if the boat has a trailing rudder too.

back decks - do not sit on the back deck of a ski. A recent repair that cost \$400 when a seam was cracked added something like 4kg to the weight of the ski.

undersides - NEVER run ANY part of ANY boat onto or into the sand. Bows and rudders are particularly vulnerable to abrasion. If you want to grind out the bottom of your own boat, fine, but DON'T do it to a club boat.

keep boats PARALLEL to the beach with the rudder not touching the sandy bottom when getting-in to start or when pulling-in after a paddle (learning to get in and out off the pontoon is a useful skill, especially in a Canberra winter).

decks and cowlings – try to learn to get into skis and kayaks from one side by putting a foot in first - not by straddling and dropping your glutes in which is likely to put stress on the back deck (see above) and, in the case of kayaks, the cowling which can detach from the boat if flexed too often.

snags - while the water level in the lake and river is low due to releases from Scrivener Dam, don't hug the banks, and keep an eye out for visible and submerged snags 'that weren't there before' (we've recently had a rudder assembly repaired, which fortunately hadn't cracked the surrounds).

The old saying is "Treat a club boat as if it were your own" - because you're a member and member-fees have paid for it (think at least \$3000 per boat as a guide). But if you're not very good at looking after your own things, maybe the saying should be "Treat a club boat like it should be treated for the benefit of the club-community". Other clubs run a booking system for every use of every club boat. Some even charge a fee. BGCC doesn't. Please don't abuse the privilege.

Summer is a great time to get out on the water, to try different boats, and to fall in occasionally ("if you're not falling in, you're not trying hard enough" some coaches would say). Enjoy yourself - and if you do fall in, be thankful BGCC is one of very few clubs to have on-site showers.

Happy Christmas, New Year and holiday season to all.

Jeremy

BGCC 24 Hour Relay – Sponsorship Gratitude



A very big thank you to **Kennards Hire Woden** and Tim Hensby for the great deal they did for us for a generator for the 24 Hour. Tim was super helpful with explanations, some extra fuel and a good deal to boot!

Similarly, our gratitude goes also to Craig at **C-Kayak Canberra** for the donated items for the 24 Hour, (he also volunteered to help us out when we were at the Lake Swim the weekend before).

So when we arrived at the store at Koala Court, Gladstone St, Fyshwick, he loaded us up with 4 pfd's and 10 long sleeve rash tops; 10 flags; and 6 bilge pumps!



We used many as prizes for the winning team, the juniors and several other awards, with the remainder going as 'lucky boat number' prizes.

While C-Kayak mainly stock recreational kayaks and SUP's they do have the Prijon sea kayaks and are now handling Stellar and soon Think ski's. At this stage there are no wing blade paddles however they do stock Vaikobi thermal wear and pfd's.

A very big thank you Craig and Tim, we really appreciate your generosity.

Patricia

Lake Burley Griffin Water Level Update: National Capital Authority

Dear Lake User Group,

As most of you are already aware, the lake level has dropped down to approximately 300mm below normal lake level over the last 8 weeks. This is primarily due to low flows into the lake combined with evaporation and abstraction from the lake for irrigation. Abstraction for the lake is administered by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) under the ACT Government. The NCA contacted the EPA in late November to request activation of low level water restrictions for abstractors and, together with other abstractors, have adjusted the extraction rate to assist in managing the lake level.

The long range forecast for the ACT remains hot and dry over the summer period and we are likely to see the lake level drop lower in the coming months. Please be aware that lower lake levels might make use of boat ramps and other lake infrastructure problematic. Please assess the suitability of boat ramps before attempting to launch a boat. During this period we ask that you remain aware of hazards that might arise while the lake level is low.

The NCA will continue to monitor the lake level and work with the EPA to control abstraction from the lake in the coming months. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

David Wright | Manager, Lake and Dam
National Capital Authority

☎ (02) 6271 2888



Boats waiting patiently at the recent BGCC 24hr race

Smoke and Health and Safety Update: Margi Bohm

The smoke haze that has blanketed Canberra over the last couple of weeks has raised some important questions regarding the short and long-term impacts of outdoor activity in the smoke. Canberra has traditionally experienced low levels of air pollution and it is rare for us to cancel an event due to poor air quality. However, with a potentially nasty fire season predicted for this year, and the preponderance of native forests around our region, it may be wise to consider some of the health-related effects of breathing in wood smoke during exercise.

Wood smoke, from a human health perspective, is categorised by the size of the smoke particles because the nose and upper respiratory tract are very effective at capturing and expelling large particles through nose hairs and mucus. Unfortunately, very small particles usually get past these filters and make their way into the lowest reaches of the lungs, especially during exercise when we are breathing hard; often through the mouth. The small particles of interest to our lung health are called PM2.5 (or particles smaller than 2.5 microns).

The ACT government has three air quality monitoring stations across Canberra: Monash in the Tuggeranong Valley, Civic and Florey in Belconnen. They measure PM2.5, PM10, ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations as well as pollen count. PM2.5 is of direct interest to us. PM10 refers to larger particles that are trapped by the nose and mucus systems of the upper airway and are of lesser interest unless one is undertaking strenuous exercise and breathing through your mouth. Then the large particles will make it to your lungs. Usually we don't worry too much about O₃, CO and NO₂ but it is wise to monitor their levels during a severe air quality episode. This is because such episodes are driven not only by the emission source, but also by the state of the atmosphere. The atmosphere has no respect for political boundaries, and it doesn't care if the pollutant is a particle or a gas. So some smoke episodes can be accompanied with high levels of CO in particular.

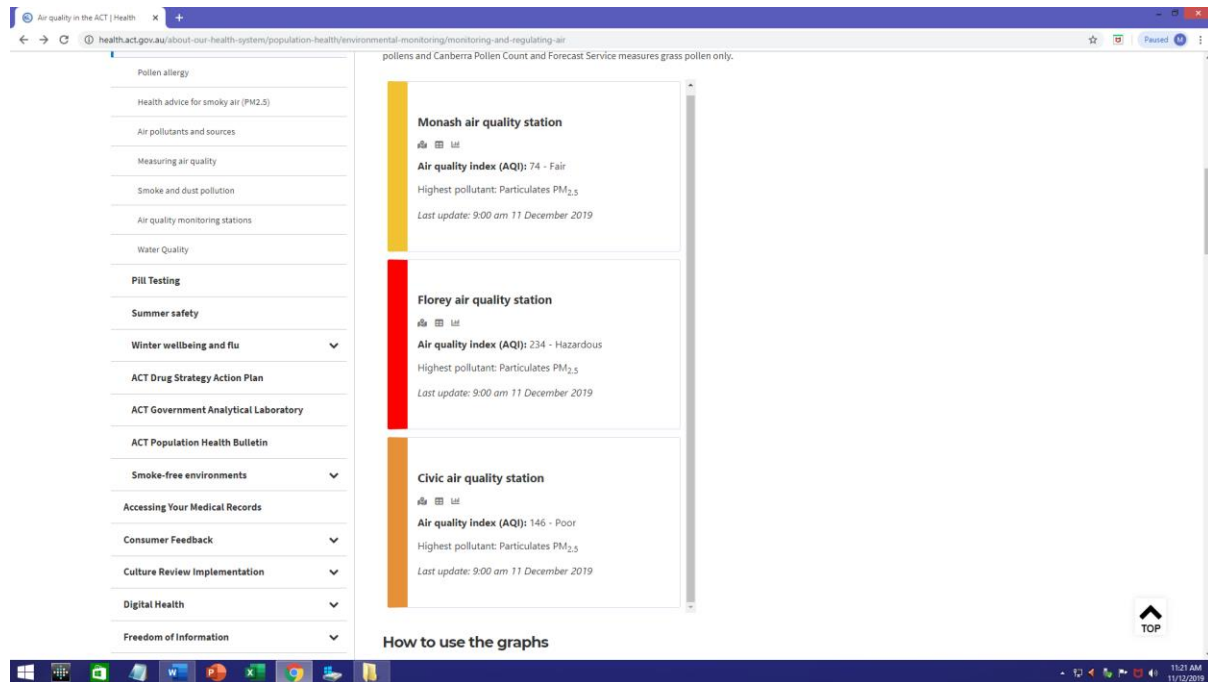
Air pollution levels are reported using an Air Quality Index (AQI) which is a measure of current conditions as a percentage of the level specified by the National Environment Protection Measure for Ambient Air standard (NEPM). A value of 100 or greater means that ambient levels have exceeded the maximum value for safety. There are 6 categories:

- Very Good – AQI between 0 and 33;
- Good – AQI between 34 and 66;
- Fair – AQI between 67 and 99;
- Poor – AQI between 100 and 149;
- Very Poor – AQI between 150 and 200;
- Hazardous – AQI greater than 200.

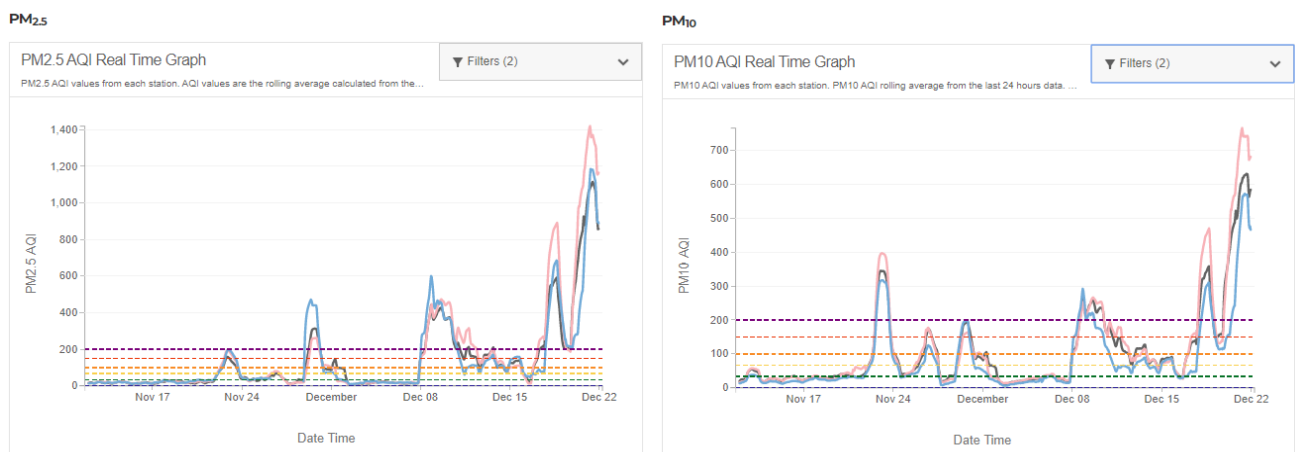
When a pollutant AQI is listed as poor, very poor and hazardous, it means that the ambient pollutant concentration has exceeded levels considered safe for humans. The catch with AQI is that different countries have different ambient concentration standards. For example, in Australia, the PM2.5 standard is 26 µg/m³ whereas the US uses 35 µg/m³. The Australian standard is more strict because industrial pushback has traditionally played a smaller role in determining these things here.

The air quality in Canberra is reported on the ACT webpage at <https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/population-health/environmental-monitoring/monitoring-and-regulating-air>

Scroll down and you will come across a general AQI index for each of the three monitoring sites (Civic is closest to Molonglo Reach) as shown in the figure below.



Scroll down some more and you will come across graphs for each pollutant. The graphs for PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ are shown below for Nov-Dec 2019. The grey line shows the data for Civic, the blue line for Monash in Tuggeranong Valley, and the pink line is for Florey in Belconnen. Normally our PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ values are good, well below the green dotted line. As soon as they exceed 100 or go above the orange dotted line, we have a potential health hazard. What is really scary is that since 17th December, we have been enbathed in an atmosphere rarely seen in even the most polluted places in the world – 10 times greater than the highest “healthy” concentrations.



The question that any coach and athlete should be asking is at what point do I decided not to coach/train outside? We get some guidance from the ACT website through the following

table found at <https://www.health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/population-health/environmental-monitoring/monitoring-and-regulating-air-0>

True to government websites, the numbers in this table relate to the actual concentration of PM2.5 particles in the air in µg/m3 and not to the AQI value where 100 AQI = 26 µg/m3. So it is hard to relate data from the easily generated AQI graphs with the health advisory

Smoky air (PM_{2.5}) health advisory categories

Air quality categories	PM _{2.5} (24 hour) µg/m3	Potential health effects without following advice or actions	Cautionary health advice/actions**
Good	0-8.9	N/A – Below the relevant air quality standard	None
Meets air quality standard	9-25.9	N/A – Meets the relevant air quality standard	No tailored advice necessary
Unhealthy for sensitive groups	26-39.9	Symptoms may occur in sensitive groups	Sensitive groups[#] should <u>reduce</u> prolonged or heavy physical activity. Where possible, these people in the community should also limit the time spent outdoors Anyone with a heart or lung condition should take their medication as prescribed by their doctor. People with asthma should follow their asthma action plan. Anyone with concerns about their health should seek medical advice from their doctor. Anyone experiencing wheezing, chest tightness or difficulty breathing should seek urgent medical attention
Unhealthy for all	40-106.9	Increased likelihood of effects for sensitive groups Symptoms may occur in the general population	Everyone should <u>reduce</u> prolonged or heavy physical activity Sensitive groups[#] should <u>avoid</u> prolonged or heavy physical activity altogether Anyone with a heart or lung condition should take their medication as prescribed by their doctor. People with asthma should follow their asthma action plan. Anyone with concerns about their health should seek medical advice from their doctor. Anyone experiencing wheezing, chest tightness or difficulty breathing should seek urgent medical attention
Very unhealthy for all	107-177.9	Significant likelihood of effects for sensitive groups Symptoms among general population common	Everyone should <u>avoid</u> prolonged or heavy physical activity Sensitive groups[#] should <u>avoid</u> all physical activity outdoors Anyone with a heart or lung condition should take their medication as prescribed by their doctor. People with asthma should follow their asthma action plan. Anyone with concerns about their health should seek medical advice from their doctor. Anyone experiencing wheezing, chest tightness or difficulty breathing should seek medical attention
Hazardous high	>177.9	Serious likelihood of effects for sensitive groups Symptoms among general population very common	Everyone should <u>avoid</u> all physical activity outdoors Sensitive groups[#] should <u>temporarily relocate</u> to a friend or relative living outside the affected area. If this is not possible, <u>remain indoors and keep activity levels as low as possible</u> Anyone with a heart or lung condition should take their medication as prescribed by their doctor. People with asthma should follow their asthma action plan. Anyone with concerns about their health should seek medical advice from their doctor. Anyone experiencing wheezing, chest tightness or difficulty breathing should seek medical attention Anyone experiencing symptoms which may be due to smoke exposure should consider taking a break away from the smoky conditions
Hazardous extreme	> 250	Serious likelihood of effects for sensitive groups Symptoms among general population very common	Cautionary health advice and actions are the same as for Hazardous high above

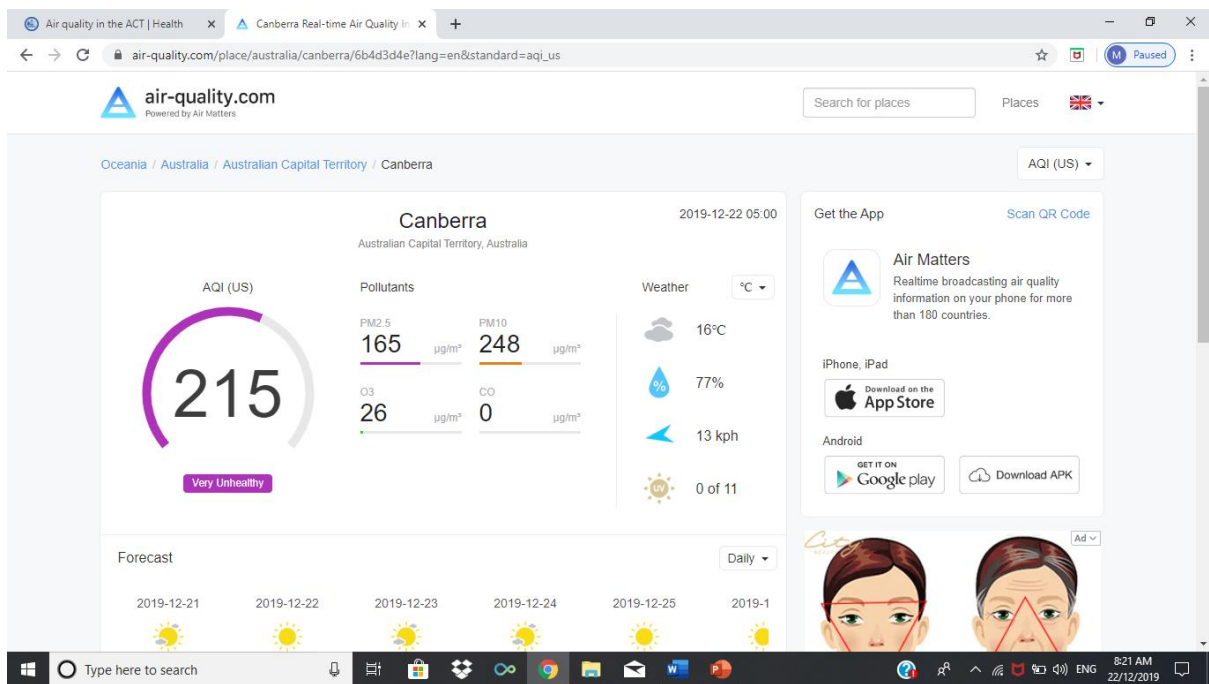
[#]People over 65, children 14 years and younger, pregnant women and those with existing heart or lung conditions.

categories. While the current data for the three monitoring stations are clearly shown on this website, we are also interested in the trend so that we can make a decision about whether or not to train. I was able to generate a graph of PM2.5 concentrations from this page but it is not simple and the resulting graph is quite hard to read. It is much easier to get graphs from the AQI page.

How then can we link the advice in the table with the easily generated AQI graphs? I downloaded some data and did a bit of maths and came up with the following guidelines:

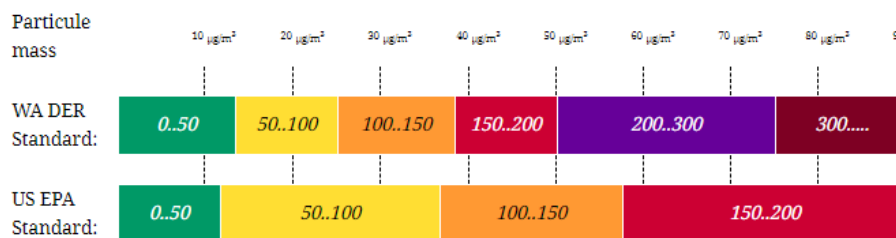
AQI for PM2.5	PM2.5 Health Advisory Category	Training Recommendations
0-33 (Very Good)	Good	No changes to training plan.
34-99 (Good to Fair)	Meets Air Quality Standards	No changes to training plan.
100-149 (Poor)	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Training outdoors not recommended for sensitive groups. P2 Mask for non-sensitive groups if training outdoors.
150-200 (Very Poor)	Unhealthy for all	Training outdoors with P2 mask.
201-465 (Hazardous)	Very Unhealthy for all	Training outdoors not recommended. If you have to train, wear a P2 mask, lower intensity and shorter time (45 minutes).
466-950 (Hazardous)	Hazardous High	No training outdoors.
> 950 (Hazardous)	Hazardous Extreme	No training outdoors.

Earlier I mentioned that AQI is linked to the standard set by the country and in Australia, we have more stringent PM2.5 standards than in the US. This would normally not be an issue except that if you google “Air Quality in Canberra”, you may get the following website which reports a much lower AQI than the ACT government site.

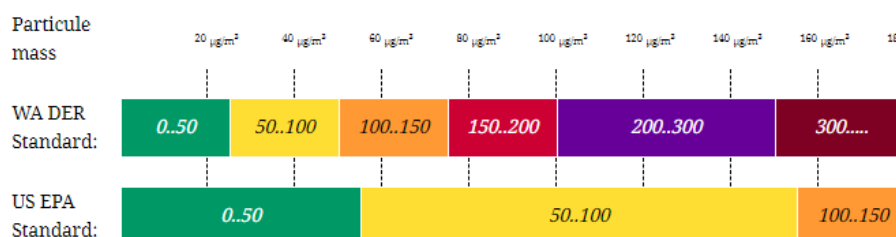


Look carefully at the writing above the 215 ... it says clearly AQI (US). Herein lies the dangers of trusting Prof. Google! The AQI shown in this website is pinned to a standard of 35 µg/m³ and not 25 µg/m³. The graph below shows how the AQI for Australia (shown here as WA DER Standard) compares with that for the US. I have included the PM2.5 and PM10

FYI. I strongly recommend that if you care about your health, use the Australian numbers to inform your outdoors activity.



And this comparison is for the PM₁₀:



I have done some research into masks and test run a couple on the water. Firstly, to remove PM2.5 particles, you will need a P2 respiratory mask. P1, surgical, paper etc., masks will not remove small particles and are a waste of money. Secondly, I found cupped masks had a better fit around my face. This is important because any fluid will take the path of least resistance and with a negative pressure mask, such as these, this means unfiltered air will reach your nasal passages if the mask does not fit properly. Finally, I found the vented mask to be the best especially for more strenuous sessions. These masks have a small one-way valve near mouth-nose height that allows hot, moist exhaled air to be vented to the outside of the mask. This reduces the build up of moisture in the mask which in turn keeps breathing easier. 3M (about \$6.00 @) and BlueRapta (about \$3 @) make good P2, cupped, vented respiratory masks available at RSEA in Fyshwick. P2 masks are also available from Bunnings and Officeworks but when I went looking, they were both out of stock.

In the table above, I have capped training with the use of masks at an AQI for PM2.5 of 200. This is because the manufacturers do not recommend using masks in very high particulate concentrations as they get clogged up quickly, breathing becomes difficult and the user will start to feel stressed. However, the mask I have does work quite well at AQI of 300 if I paddle at a low intensity.

I hope that this helps clear some of the uncertainty about training in smoky conditions and that everyone takes a minute to think about their health if they decide to paddle when PM2.5 levels are high. One estimate I saw during my research was that 1 hour of exercise in Poor Conditions equates to a pack of cigarettes! The added incentive is that some particles associated with bush fires are carcinogenic, especially in Australia where our native tree species have high concentrations of volatile organic compounds. So please be sensible, check the ACT website and invest in some P2 masks if you want to paddle during smoke episodes with AQIs of less than 200.

See you on the water, *Margi*
BGCC Health and Safety Officer

Coaches Corner: Margi Bohm

In October and November, we ran the inaugural BGCC PaddleFit, a block of coaching (4 weeks), linked to the Wednesday night timetrials. The Sunday coaching sessions were well attended and everyone learned a bit about how to paddle more efficiently and how to stay injury free. Everyone made improvements but there were two standouts ... Basil Lau was clearly the most improved in term of technique and Wade Margetts took the award for controlling his desire to race hard in the time-trials towards racing with good technique. Well Done Basil and Wade ... book your tickets for the Annual BGCC Awards night to find out what you have won!

The next Paddle to Fitness block will start in January and will be designed towards preparing for the NSW Winter Series race to be held at BGCC in early February.

It was really good to see so many BGCC paddlers participate in the 24-hour relay. This is an iconic BGCC event that was started 25 years ago. This year, BGCC teams took out the top 3 spots with Liam, Andy and John winning overall, followed closely by Gary, Andrew and Luke. Both of these all-male teams raced hard for the top spot. Third overall belonged to the first Mixed team of Larissa, club pres Jeremy, Craig and myself. The race for third was hotly contested with Lane Cove breathing down our neck for the whole race.

But what I enjoyed most of all is the camaraderie and good will that this event brings out in all of us. Slowing down to give one of the solo paddlers a bit of a lift; helping a BGCC team when the going got tough; sharing camping resources, coffee and between race snacks; working together regardless of who was racing whom. By far the most organised of the BGCC campers was Jesse Robertson with his portable bbq and hamburger maker! By far the most minimalist paddler was Richard Barnes (Lane Cove) who stuck to his tradition of arriving on the Friday night rain, with fold up bicycle and flat bladed paddle, dossing down in the shed on borrowed mats and sleeping bag and then paddling solo. In contrast, the glampers came with gazebos and attached tents, tables of food and drink and even lists of expected paddling times. One team even had a calculator to determine who was paddling when once fatigue eroded all ability to add!

But most commendable of all is the effort put in by the club organising committee. Tony takes the award for the most personalised Uber delivery (Maccas breakfast) and Shane for the most helpful comments and suggestions to keep the race running smoothly.



Artists impression of Tony Mee's Uber Breakfast...

Several race officials also paddled which meant that keeping time was a bit of a juggling act. True to the tradition of marathon racing, many fellow paddlers and their partners came did a time-keeping stint to give people a break or to stand in while they raced. That is the true spirit of the BGCC 24-hour relay. May it continue for another 25 years! *Margi*

Clean Up Lake Burley Griffin Day

It seems many of our members missed it! In fact there were only 3 club members (one of who was an organiser and her family) there on Sunday 15th December to clean up our river.

Thanks to Tammy for organising the event. Hopefully there was more support for it from other lake users in other locations...

It's actually a really pleasant thing to do. Taking a very stable boat and just slowly cruising along the river banks, under trees, into all the nooks and crannies. It's a totally different river and you get to enjoy the wildlife - lizards sunning, a water rat swimming lazily around, floating logs with amazing



miniature gardens growing on them, birds of varying sizes, one waterfowl on its nest of reeds on the water edge with a tiny chick scampering around her. Very peaceful.

Then there is the manoeuvring skills to get your kayak in and out of trees & snags while trying to reach that elusive piece of rubbish.

And you're doing it for the environment, your playground. One positive is that there was actually not a lot of rubbish in the river, more around the shoreline.

There is always next time....

Patricia

BGCC Canoe Polo Invitational report: Laura Kleinrahm.

Polo has recently had two Summer Series events, in Canberra and Penrith respectively. Usually the smaller comp of the season, Canberra attracted more teams than Sydney, and the weather was unusually well behaved for both competitions.

The Women's team was half Juniors/ beginners, making these comps a good development opportunity before the Nationals in April. Unfortunately the results weren't on our side, coming 5th and 4th, although a composite ACT team came 2nd in Canberra's Div2.

The Open team was also unable to reproduce their homeground win from 2018, although they made an impressive shift from 5th to getting into the Grand Final, where they unfortunately lost to NSW, at the Penrith competition.

Next up is Adelaide in January, which will feature a Women's league to develop players nominating for the 2020 World Championships, before Nagambie and back to Adelaide for Nationals.

For now, the Christmas party has been done, so it's time to pack up and relax for the holidays, and we'll be back on water in the New Year.



National women's training camp (above) and Polo puppies on guard!

24Hr Paddling Challenge: The Helpers...

The general running of our Club and the organisation of events is often carried by what we could term 'the usual suspects' – the Committee, members of the Grey Army etc.

However; often, when we really are up against it for volunteers to devote a lot of time in the one block, it becomes difficult, especially if some form of expertise is necessary. During the 24Hr weekend we saw some of the 'unusual suspects' come to the fore to help make our event a success, and if you sat in the timing tent with them you would agree that they are definitely 'unusual'.

Dave Gordon offered his services as Safety Officer and then stayed for the whole 24Hr helping the timing people. He made sure our generator kept running and called out incoming boat numbers to the more optically challenged amongst us.

Tony Mee is a regular volunteer for the more difficult events, particularly the Hawkesbury and our time trials. Tony was regularly challenged in the timing tent, having to operate 2 laptops, where the incorrect push of 1 button could create chaos to the final results. Tony never lost his cool once and his enjoyment of the event was obvious, even with his eyes closed later into the event.

Tom Hick regularly offers the services of his rubber ducky and himself for Club events. Tom was on the water prior to the event moving buoys, marking snags and attaching the lights to the buoys. During the event, once or twice he was asked to move the orange start/finish buoy and did not complain once! He also spent the whole event in the timing tent helping out (or should that read 'hassling') the timers.

Shane Lund is another who regularly offers his tinnie for Club events. Due to a stuff-up on my part, he brought his boat to the river when we did not really need it. Nevertheless, Shane decided to stay for the whole event and assist with the timekeeping.

There was never a dull moment in the timing tent and I can honestly say that I probably enjoyed myself more in the timing tent than I did on the water.

Thanks unsung Heroes your invaluable contribution made our event a success. *Bob Collins*



At night in the timing tent, with the smoke haze which caused the hiatus in the 24 hr paddling challenge.

Photo: Stephen Routley

Helen's History of the 24 Hour Paddling Challenge

(Just completed: Weekend of 7th – 8th December 2019)



The next one will be about the 25th (or perhaps 24th or 26th – memory fails me!) annual (almost) BGCC 24-hour paddling challenge. The Sydney Olympics interfered with us choosing a date in 2000, so there was no event that year; and we might have missed one other year, and/or added a second event one year when we changed the time of year for the race.

Memory tells me that BGCC took part in an inter-club TK1 relay challenge at Wyong, against the Central Coast Canoe Club, **in 1992**. BGCC came out tops!! We found the drive home to be a bit dangerous for all the tired paddlers, SO.....

In **1993** BGCC organised an Australia-wide TK1 paddling challenge for any club interested in competing against us, with teams paddling on their own 5 km course on their own home water and phone-ins each four hours, with the accumulated laps/distances recorded on our white-board. For a few years these races were quite popular, with teams from Queensland, WA and Victoria, as well as NSW.



You might recognise a couple of people from these “historic” photos

Above: 1996 Ladies TK1 team, with TK1 and “Ladies Plate”. The plate lost the label and is now in the club kitchen.

Below: 1998 Post Race TC1 team (and timekeeper) enjoying Champagne and Chocolate Cake for breakfast



For the first 5 or 6 years there was a lot of interest and competition between clubs around the country – then we had a bad-weather year and most seemed to lose interest; so we tried changing the rules a little. Instead of TK1's only, other boats were permitted (can you believe BGCC managed a team of six C2's in **1999**) and then more than one lap at a time by each team member; after that, smaller or larger than 6-boats/paddlers teams and eventually solo paddlers



Above: 1999 Assorted C2 paddlers and timekeeper

Interest waxed and waned, with one or two years with just one or two BGCC teams enjoying an overnight paddle on our lovely piece of river. Long-term club members might remember the water-weeds growing in the middle of the river – needing to be “harvested” every so often – including on the start-morning of our 24 hr paddle!!!

Resurgence happened in **2010** when a more enthusiastic BGCC committee decided to revamp the whole event with invites sent out to many community groups (firefighters, police, company workers) as well as

inviting Paddling Clubs to join us at Molonglo Reach. (Well, at least we didn't have the long drive home after a night of paddling ☺)

Below: 2010, the waiting crowds



2010 was also a memorable event for other reasons: this was the year when ACT Sports Minister, Andrew Barr, came along to cut the (blue) ribbon for the then latest extension to the Club Shed and for me – it was the first time I didn't take part, as I had recently managed to break a leg.



Above: Bob Collins holding the ribbon for Andrew Barr to cut – our Grand Opening (and me out of action)



2011 was probably the biggest assemblage of challengers we have had – well done to the committee of 2011. From the report in *Blazing Paddles* (Vol 22 Issue 3), there were 25 teams and over 100 paddlers! Apparently it was a bit cool and windy; and damp?. (I was away somewhere.)



Above & Left Scenes from the 2011 event



2012 turned out to be even bigger and better than 2011: once again 100 or more paddlers in 32 teams!



Above: SUP and others at the start

Left: The unusual sight of Gary Rake on a SUP This was also a year for photos:



Shane was feeling the effect of his 45 laps in the 24 hours, needing help to get off the water, some food and water and then a good rest – anywhere!

below: On-water competition, right: Paul O'Neill, David Abela, Lee Rice and Nick Grey



below: Three of the Slick Chicks with Stick
right: Jess Flint timekeeping – with small helper

below



Assorted boats on the river, Richard Barnes & ??
and Shane Lund (right)



2013 brought out a few new teams, including “Team Darwin” (they just evolved) with Allan Newhouse, Karmen Ison, Russell Luton, Ben Hannan, Adam Scott and Team Manager Carolyn Williams, with Richard Fox ducking out of the photo.



2014: This was the year of Anjie Lees’ *Guinness Book of Records* triumph. Over 5-6 December, Anjie managed a remarkable 201.2 km. (Funny how she has been back only once since then.)



Above left: The lake in front of the “Beach” *AboveRight:* Ducks on the water

2014 was also the year of the deluge, starting with sun and blue skies, followed by hail, wind and rain, where “Changing into dry clothes was futile” and the “tent weatherproofing was tested”.

But the Sunday morning provided shining blue skies once again and everyone went home happy



2015: *Above:* Richard Barnes (Left) and Shane Lund (Right); *Below:* The weird (Left) and the Wonderful (Right)



2016: Pretty sure there was an event, but can't find anything about it.

2017:With the absence of our organising people with big ideas, BGCC were back to the small-scale event, but with some added interest from paddlers wanting to complete their Very Big Year (1,000 km in races in 1 year) plus others training for long canoe races in USA, there was a broad range of entrants, even if low in numbers.



The 9:30 a.m. Saturday start, with a couple of paddlers arriving late for their start!



Above: Tranquillity of the Control Tent

Left: Paddlers taking a toe-warming break

Below: The Spectator Fleet



2018: Photos have again evaded me, but this time we had some inter-club competition: Lane Cove travelled to join us on the water, along with the people chasing their 1,000 km for the Very Big Year and those training for long events in the USA.

2019: This year was a bit different again – with a major interruption, caused by the huge cloud of smoke which rolled in just towards dusk. On the basis of paddler safety, the race was stopped from about 9 p.m. and didn't recommence until 6 a.m., so more like a 15 hour paddling challenge. Lane Cove did indeed come back to Challenge BGCC; as did a teams from Sutherland SCC, as well as a Victorian team of

UC1's (single canoes), a team of Juniors, teams of males paddlers, teams of mixed sex paddlers, teams of single boats and teams of doubles boats – plus those doing it alone. There was a total of 26 “Teams”, made up of 3x Solo Single-boat Females and one Solo Double-boat Females; 9x Solo Single Males; 1x Junior Males; 5x Single-boat Mixed-sex Relay Teams; 5x Single-boat Males Teams; 2x Double-boat Mixed-sex Teams. Seeing the 26 boats head off for the start at 10 a.m. was great!

Apart from the 54 paddlers taking part, the timing tent was also a hive of activity, with Tony Mee in charge



of not one but two iPads to record the lap times of each team (one for BGCC, one for PNSW), plus my insistence on using the good old club printer-timer and pages of paper to record all paddlers and times. Tony was ably assisted by various volunteers, including club members Rachel Muldoon and Shane Lund, other paddlers in their time off-water and various family and friends roped in to help. Throughout the whole time, Safety Officer David Gordon (calling boat-numbers) and rubber-ducky owner-driver Tom Hick (moving buoys, installing and later turning on the lights and cyalumes– helped by Kerri Vaughan) were on the go. The atmosphere was great (in both senses!) – until the smoke cloud rolled in. Make it your aim to take part in the 2020 BGCC 24 Hour Paddle Challenge! It is a wonderful way to meet other



paddlers, have some hot (or not-so-hot) competition in either Serious or Fun paddling competition. Or volunteer some of your time in the timing tent – there was a lot of laughter coming from there! And for end-of-paddling celebration: chocolate cake and bubbly to drink 😊

After watching the cumulus clouds building over the fires near Braidwood for most of the day, the evening change of wind direction brought a huge front of smoke and ash from the east.

We continued paddling for a bit, but people were getting sore eyes and some were having breathing problems, so the race was called off to check out the conditions at first light.

Apart from the smoke, at 3 a.m. the (cyalume) nightlights were very pretty. *Helen Tongway*

Farewell to RussL and Caro

Farewell and thanks

I take the opportunity of this last newsletter of 2019 to say farewell to the many BGCC paddlers I have trained and raced with – and in particular the hard working club committees that I have worked with as the club's marathon convenor.

Carolyn and I have decided to move north to the Queensland coast early in the New Year – an event that if you told us even six months ago was going to happen, we would have scoffed at. Such is the unanticipated irony of life's sea changes!

As paddlers who value their boats, I thought you might appreciate this move-related anecdote. Anyone who's moved homes will appreciate the daunting logistics involved. Of course, one of the big ones for me was how to get the fleet to Queensland! And while I have pared it considerably, there remained several boats that were *essential* to take north.



Varsity Lakes; early morning training with Currumbin Creek Paddlers

So I texted Richard Wikaire, the Kayak Courier, hoping that he may be able to transport them late this year, early next. "I will be in Canberra mid-December," was the text reply. "Great! We are actually moving to a place called Mermaid Waters but we won't be there for a while; so can you take them to my sister's place in Brisbane if I provide address details?" I asked.

"No problem, neighbour," was his prompt text reply. "I live at Mermaid Waters. So you can just leave them at my place until you want to pick them up." Indeed, Google Maps confirmed he lives less than a kilometre from where we are moving to. I wouldn't suggest this ordains the move, but it's a good omen for the future.

Thanks all and hope to see some of you next April at Nationals in Geelong.

Russell Lutton and Carolyn Williams

Ed: We'll miss you both Russell and Caro, and a very big thank you for all that "excellence in herding cats" for various marathon series races over the years too. Why not come back and visit for a paddle in the dead of winter just to see what you're missing?