



Newsletter of the
BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB

Volume 31 Issue 2, November 2020

Your Committee:

President: Bob Collins

Vice President: Patricia Ashton

Secretary: Rachel Muldoon

Treasurer: Shadi Samir

Safety Officer: Margi Bohm

Membership Secretary: Patricia Ashton

Public Officer: Bob Collins

Editor: Sue Powell

Burley Griffin Canoe Club Inc.
PO Box 341
Jamison Centre ACT 2614
www.bgcc.org.au

In this Issue:

- 24 hour Paddle Challenge 28th-29th November - **Get your entries in NOW**
- Clean-up day: Sunday 15th November – help clean up the shed and the river!
- Which club boat might suit me?
- Race reports – Morison marathon
- And lots more!



*The ACT Government assists this organisation through the
Sport & Recreation Grants Program*



Contents

Coming Events:	2
President's Report: Bob Collins.....	3
Safety Officer Report: Margi Bohm	3
Boat Captain's Report: Jeremy Cook	4
Which club boat might suit me?.....	5
Canoe Polo update – Louise Gates	7
Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day	7
24 Hour Paddling Challenge 2020 – Get your entries in NOW.....	8
Who's who?	9
Coach's Corner: Margi Bohm	10
2020 PaddleNSW Award Recipients.....	10
Race reports	11
Good news for the Windsor Paddlesports Club	14
Grundy's New Kayak: A Lamentation.....	15

Coming Events:

- *Wednesday 11th November. Twilight Paddle to Fitness series*
- *Saturday 14th November. BGCC Portage Round (12km)*
- *Sunday 15th November. BGCC shed clean-up and Clean-up LBG day*
- *Sunday 15th November. NSW Canoe Slalom State Championships. Penrith Whitewater Stadium*
- *Wednesday 18th November. Twilight Paddle to Fitness series*
- *Wednesday 25th November. Twilight Paddle to Fitness series*
- *28th – 29th November. 24-hour paddle challenge, BGCC, Molonglo Reach, Campbell ACT*
- *Saturday 5th December. BGCC Sprint Round (5km)*
- *Wednesday 9th December. Twilight Paddle to Fitness series*
- *Saturday 19th December. BGCC Multi Round (TBA)*

President's Report: Bob Collins

We have now received Deeds for each of our Grants and Shane and Scott Hunter are working on the meeting room ceiling insulation. I have also contacted our plumbing contractor and given him the go ahead to install guttering along our latest extension.

New boats are now in the shed. We now have 3 new recreational 'Platypus' boats and 2 new racing boats will arrive in November.

We have donated 2 very old double kayaks and 5 old paddles that are no longer used to Bernie Cragg, a member of a NSW club who is training juniors in his spare time.

We may have more news on changes to our fleet soon.

Morison 50

On a stormy Saturday, October 31st, the inaugural Morison 50 was held on the Hawkesbury at Windsor. For those who decided not to go up to this race – good call!

Danielle and I in our double, Richard Fox, John Preston and Pete Connolly in singles, and the irrepressible Alan Newhouse in his beautiful home built Canoe decided to try to tame the elements. (See race reports later in this edition)

24Hr Paddle Challenge

Our annual event will go ahead on 28-29 November 2020. Details will be in Blazing Paddles, posted on the website and emailed to members. We will be sending out an email to all members asking for volunteers for certain tasks.

Gate to the Overflow carpark

Often, we are unable to lock the gate to the overflow carpark when we leave as there are still cars in the area. We have now come to an arrangement with Transport Canberra and City Services that if their staff or early morning cleaning contractors see the gate left open, with no cars in the carpark, they will padlock it closed for us.

Shed Operations

There will a shed 'clean up' on Sunday 15 November commencing at around 9:00am. Confirmation details will be emailed soon so if you can spare an hour or two to help out, it would be appreciated.

- Bob Collins

Safety Officer Report: Margi Bohm

Spring has sprung and with it cygnets, wood ducklings and even swamphen chicks. Has anyone seen a platypus pup? But unfortunately, spring also brings comes long grass and snakes. The ACT government tries to stay on top of the long grass in our area but not always so please be careful when carrying your boat to and from the water. Please be vigilant and make a lot of noise, like foot stamping, as you walk down to the water and keep a sharp lookout. Snakes react to vibrations so stamping your feet and talking loudly works wonders. If you see a snake, please let me know place and time.

We are predicted to have a very wet spring and summer. Googong Dam is 100 % full so every time it rains, the river will rise. We may or may not have big floods but be careful when paddling in the flowing water. And once it subsides, watch out for debris. We will also get outbreaks of high bacterial counts. The ACT government issues Primary Contact warnings when this happens and we will endeavour to keep you up to date. But be aware that after a big rain event, bacterial levels often increase in the river and falling out or swimming should be avoided. If you do fall out, try not to ingest any water, get into the showers as soon as possible and give yourself a thorough wash with soap.

COVID-19 infections remain low in the ACT and surrounds but this does not mean that we can be complacent. At the moment, we all enjoy a city with very few restrictions and an economy that is at least alive!. Let's keep it

that way. Summer brings with it a desire for BBQs and socialising so please do the right thing and socially distance – 1.5 m apart and no hugging. Please continue to treat all surfaces as contaminated. Wash your hands, sanitise, and wash and disinfect surfaces you use, and we will all stay safe. If you have any symptoms, please stay away from the shed and get tested.

Margi

Boat Captain's Report: Jeremy Cook

Shed clean up, Sunday 15th November.

The boat shed will be getting a spring clean at 10:00am on Sunday 15 November. Please come down to help out.

Bring gloves, brooms and anything else you think might be useful, and bring a FACE MASK - this is not so much a coronavirus thing as it is to protect you from the HORRIFIC DUST when we use the blower to clean under the boat racks.

Thinking of the dust, the intention is to remove all club boats from the shed before we fire up the blower. We will NOT be removing private boats. If you don't want your boat to be covered in dust you will need to remove it yourself.

Paddles, life jackets, etc

If kept in the shed, private paddles and life jackets should be stored IN your boat.

However: ..

- If it doesn't interfere with your neighbour, paddles can be stored on the rack beside your boat. In this case the paddle should be in a padded cover to prevent damage to other boats.
- If a life jacket is hung on the stern of your boat it should not dangle down and interfere with the boat below; generally this isn't a problem if the back section of the jacket is laid on the boat and the front flaps hang down.
- Paddles not stored correctly may be moved into the back of the shed. There have been complaints about paddles getting in the way when people are trying to get their boats in and out. There is one rack spot we have not been able to allocate because there are paddles in the way.

I'm embarrassed to have to be so pedantic about paddles and life jackets, and it's probably the actions of a minority that are causing problems. Remember, no one should cause damage to another person's boat, and we need to consider others in our paddling community. Simple courtesy is more important than self interest.

Club boats

All club boats are kept in the 'old' shed. The sign-in sheet is also in this part of shed. With COVID restrictions relaxing, anybody using a club boat is required to record this on the sign-in sheet.

If there are any issues with or repairs required to club boats or other club equipment, you can email me using the link on the BGCC website (bgcc.org.au). Just go to Contacts > Committee > Boat Captain. Or email me directly using swimming.fast@yahoo.com.au

Which club boat might suit me?

I have attached a list of all club boats and a crude description of each. Any comments on this list would be welcomed.

Jeremy

Which club boat might suit me?

Rack #	Type	Make	Model	Size /ID	Description	Comments	Stability*
BAY D							
D1	K1	Old style			White & blue	Tippy older boat. Marked No.34	2
D2	K1	Mango			White & red	Easy pinch and slide adjustment of half foot plate.	4
D3	K1	Old style			White	Tippy older boat. Marked No.33	2
D4	K1	Vajda	Infusion	M	Yellow	65 - 75 kg paddler	2
D5	K1	Vajda	Infusion 2	L	Blue & orange	75 - 85 kg paddler	2
D6	K1	Vajda	Infusion 2	XL	Yellow	85+ kg paddler	2
D7	K1	Vajda	Spirit	M	White & blue	Masters K1. 43cm wide.	3
D8	K1	Vajda	40	L	White & blue	Masters K1. New version of Vajda Spirit. (On order - due Nov 2020)	3
D9	K1	Vajda	46	L	White & blue	Masters K1. 46cm wide.	3.5
D10	K1	Vajda	Voyageur	L	White & blue	Stable Masters/Para K1. 52cm wide.	4
D11	K1	Vajda	52	L	White & blue	Stable Masters K1. 52cm wide. New version of Vajda Voyageur.	4
D12	K1	Vajda	46	L	White & blue	Masters K1. 46cm wide. (On order - due Nov 2020)	3.5
D13	Rec	Dagger			Yellow & blue		stable
D14	Rec	Dagger			Yellow & blue		stable
D15	TK1	Old style			White	Stable boat with trailing rudder. Marked No.15	3.5
BAY E							
E1	Canoe			Single	White		stable
E2	Canoe			Single	White		stable
E4	K1	Vajda	Minisonic	Junior	Blue	45 - 65 kg paddler	3
E5	TK1	Sladecraft	UFO		White, yellow, blue		5
E6	TK1		Yellow/green		Yellow & green		5
E7	K1	Vajda	Minisonic	Junior	Blue	45 - 65 kg paddler	3
E8	K1		Guppy	Junior	Blue		3.5
E9	Rec	Australis	Platypus	Purple		Stable, plastic recreational boat. 60 cm wide.	stable
E10	Rec	Australis	Platypus			Stable, plastic recreational boat. 60 cm wide.	stable
E11	K1	Vajda	Minisonic	Junior	Blue	45 - 65 kg paddler	3
E12	K1	Vajda	Minisonic	Junior	Blue	45 - 65 kg paddler	3
E13	Rec	Australis	Platypus			Stable, plastic recreational boat. 60 cm wide.	stable

Rack #	Type	Make	Model	Size /ID	Description	Comments	Stability*
E14	Rec	Australis	Platypus			Stable, plastic recreational boat. 60 cm wide.	stable
E16	SUP		SUP			Stand-up paddle board	
E17	Rec		Spirit		White & yellow	Rudderless recreational boat.	stable
E18	Rec	Hobie	Quest		Yellow	Sit-on-top suitable for larger paddlers.	very stable
E20	SUP		SUP			Stand-up paddle board x2	
BAY A							
A1	Canoe			Double	Light blue	Stable, double canoe.	stable
A2	TK2		Lethal Weapon	Double	White, yellow, blue	Stable, double touring kayak.	4
A3	K2	Unknown	True Blue	Double	Blue	Racing K2. Requires boat captain permission to use.	2
A5	K2	Old style		Double			
A6	K2	Masque	Green	Double			
A7	Reserved						
A8	TK2		Unfair Advantage	Double	White, yellow, blue	Stable, double touring kayak.	stable
A9	K1	Old style	"Regina"		Red	Relatively stable K2. Holds Junior Ladies U14 Murray Marathon record, 1994.	4
A10	LR	Horizon	Flyer		Yellow & blue	Long rec touring/racing kayak. Underslung rudder. Pedals.	stable
A11	Ski	Epic	V8				stable
A12	Ski	Epic	V7				very stable
A14	Ski	Epic	V10				3.5
A15	Ski	Epic	V8				stable
A16	Ski	Epic	V7				very stable
A17	Sea kayak	Mirage	730	Double		Sea kayak. Touring.	very stable
A18	Sea kayak	Mirage	580	Single		Sea kayak. Touring.	very stable
A19	LR	Horizon	Flyer		Orange	Long rec touring/racing kayak. Trailing rudder. Tiller.	stable
BAY B							
B1	Ski			Double		Double ski.	4
BAY F		Selection of canoe polo and slalom boats - TBC					
*Stability values are indicative only. Although makers often give comparative values to their boats, there is no standard rating scale.							

Canoe Polo update – Louise Gates

Canoe Polo has continued to thrive over winter even adding a few new members. Pool sessions are currently on the unprecedented day of TUESDAY 8-9:30pm at Tuggeranong Pool. Other trainings are happening at adhoc times during the week. Looking forward to the scheduling of this summer's comps, but nothing scheduled as yet. Any queries: Louise 0406195089

Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day

Sunday 15th November. 9am,-12pm: Time to give back a little to keep our river and lake a great place to paddle! And with the **Shed clean up** on at 10am, make a morning of it and help out with both.

With National Recycling Week just around the corner, various user groups of the Lake are once again organising Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day. This year's event will take place on Sunday, 15 November from 9am and 12pm, and you are all encouraged to join us!

Last year, 130+ volunteers on foot, dragon boat, kayak, canoe and stand-up paddle boards took part in Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day. Together, they collected 108 bags of rubbish plus a number of plastic and industrial items that were too big to fit into the bags themselves.

The club has a range of stable boats or the inflatable SUP's (see '[What club boat might suit me?](#)') which would be ideal for this activity. Just a gentle paddle around the edges of the river picking up any rubbish. Bags and grabbers are supplied but gloves are a good idea, as are long tongs etc. A great activity for beginners or experienced paddlers.

To participate, just sign-up at one of the six registration booths on the day.

EVENT DETAILS:

Event: Clean-up Lake Burley Griffin Day during National Recycling Week

When: Sunday, 15 November from 9am to 12pm (volunteer rego begins at 0830)

Where: Registration sites will be at the following locations:

- Burley Griffin Canoe Club
- Lotus Bay (near Yacht Club)
- Weston Park (near Playstation)
- Black Mountain Peninsula (near picnic benches on west side)
- Kingston Foreshore (near Local Press)*
- Grevillea Park (at the Capital Lakes Rowing Club)

*Volunteers on watercraft cannot register at this location unfortunately.

Volunteers are required to:

- Register at one of the booths.
- Bring work gloves and wear enclosed shoes
- All children under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian
- Those on watercraft (BYO) must wear a lifejacket or PFD at all times during the clean-up effort.
- Social distancing measures will be in place. Groups greater than 10 people will need to spread across rego areas.

Please give the Events team a call if you have any questions about the event on 6271 2888. Please call me if you have any questions about registration on 6272 2961. We hope to see you there.

Kind regards

Chantelle Martins | Officer Lake & Dam
National Capital Authority

24 Hour Paddling Challenge 2020 – Get your entries in NOW

Weekend of 28th – 29th November, 2020

Hosted by BGCC at Molonglo Reach, Morshead Drive, Campbell, ACT

This year we are again planning for a low-key event. BYO: everything. Shelter tents permitted in a limited area, not under trees.

Entries: via Webscorer [2020 BGCC 24 hr Paddle Challenge](#)

Entry Fee: 0 for U18 \$20 for U23 \$30 for over 65 \$35 for all others

These fees are for current financial members of PaddleNSW, Dragon Boat NSW or Surf NSW. Other paddlers must add a \$20 surcharge. Minimum age for Juniors is 15.

Entries are per paddler, not per boat, including for doubles, multi-paddler craft and relay teams.

A late fee of \$10 will be applied to late entries after 11:59 p.m., 24th November, 2020.

Enter: Either the 24-hour or the 16-hour event. But, have the option of dropping from the 24-hour to the 16-hour event by advising the organisers before 8:00 p.m. on Day 1 of the event.

Course: 4.7 km loop course on Molonglo River

Briefing: 9:30 a.m. Saturday 28th November, 2020

Start Time: 10:00 a.m., Saturday 28th November, 2020

Finish Time: 10:00 a.m., Sunday 29th November, 2020

Allowable Craft: Kayak, Canoe, Ski and SUP

Solo: one single or double canoe, kayak, ski or SUP with a single paddler or 2-person crew for the entire event.

Team: a relay of paddlers rotating over the period of the event:

- 'Competitive', with up to 4x paddlers using single-craft or 8 paddlers using double-craft, in one or more canoes, skis or SUPs.
- 'Recreational' with up to 8 paddlers using single craft or 16 using double-craft in one or more canoes, kayaks skis or SUPs

Note: Both Solo and Team entries will need a 'Team Name' when registering. Paddlers on a team must use the *identical team name* when registering.

Do you need help to find a team? Why not add your details (or see who else is looking for a team) here.



Larissa Cleverly, early morning paddle, taken by Paul Jurak, AKA the Kayakcameraman.

Who's who?

Rachel Muldoon (BGCC Secretary)

I moved from Melbourne in 2018 for work as an Account Director and have now made Canberra my home. I have 3 adult children 38, 36 and 27 and an 8 mth old grandson. They are based in Melbourne and Torquay, Victoria.

I first started paddling when I was based in Canberra 2012 -2015 for work and joined the BGCC as I always wanted to try it. I started paddling with Anne Cronin and Patricia who inspired me to take part in some of the marathon races. I returned to Melbourne and started training with a team out of Port Melbourne. In 2016 I completed the Murray Marathon. My next goal is to do the Riverland Paddle and Murray Marathon again in 2021. Having just finished treatment for Breast Cancer I have 12 months to get myself back in shape so looking forward to training. I also volunteer as a board member of the Women in ICT (www.wic.org.au) here in ACT as the events coordinator and I love bike riding.

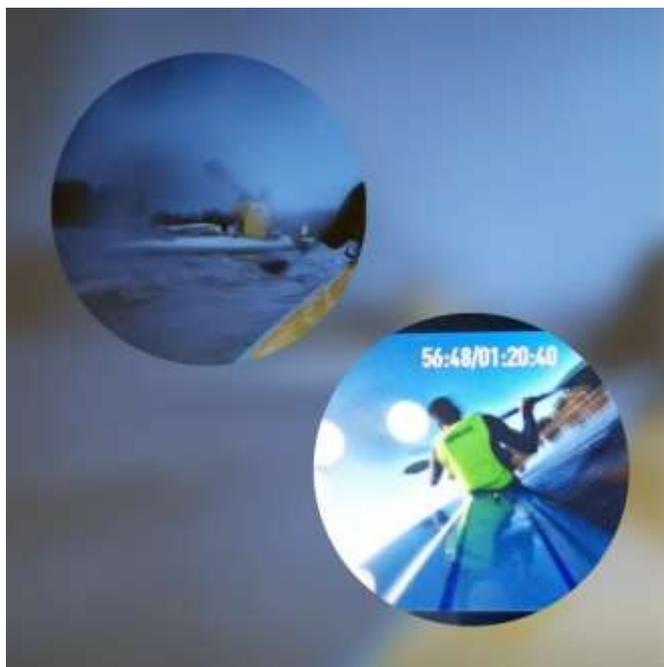
Shadi Samir (BGCC Treasurer)

Hello, my name is Shadi, if in doubt go Eminem's Slim Shady. I got my first taste of paddle in Feb 2020. I've never paddled prior & I fell in love instantly. Not only would kayaking allow me to see platypus on the river, the jumping fish, but it'll help keep my broken bones, plates & metalware intact, as falling in the water should have less impact than falling on roads/gravels. Soon after I dragged my closest friend Anastasia to paddling, she loved it as well.

It was till April 2020 when riding indoor without going anywhere was becoming ever boring, and I realised the club was not fully shut that I decided to give Kayak full swing. Anastasia and I joined Tuesday's & Sunday's regular sessions run by David & occasionally Patricia. They have been very patient & supportive to my slow learning. I looked on the club website I spotted regular training groups. I emailed both and got a quick response from Gary. I was excited they welcomed me to join their training sessions. I enjoyed challenging myself to keep up with strong kayakers. I also got support from Margie who is always ready to give advice and is keen to see everyone improve. I am certain I hold the club's 2020 winter record for number of falls. My favourite was falling countless times from Epic V10 in -3C.

I put my hand up for the Treasury post as a way to contribute back to the club's supporting & welcoming environment that I experienced. Trent; the previous treasurer has done amazing work in digitising the role. I am a technology enthusiast. Apart from sports you will find me learning AI & machine learning. I hope to offer improvements to the club operations particularly race timing, wouldn't it be nice to have an AI running off a camera to record race results & timing in real time?

I do hope to participate in club races & interstate events till my body decided to call it off.



Shadi decided swimming might be faster than paddling on a Sat training session, right not sure what happened there, but yes you know where Shadi ended up next.

Coach's Corner: Margi Bohm

The 24-hour relay is still going ahead. There has been a lot of interest from Sydney clubs to come up and do the event. I urge you all to get together and put together some teams (4-6 boats) and to hold the BGCC banner high.

Introduction to Coaching and the Foundation Coach courses are now available through the PA website and are online. If you are interested in getting a coaching qualification, please contact me so that I can walk you through the process. My email is margi.bohm@gmail.com.

Club Coaches. I would like to get together to discuss some equipment improvements that we have scored from the ACT government. It would be good to get all of our coaches in one room at the same time to discuss how to best put the equipment to work to benefit all of our members. Please email me if you are interested in being part of this initiative. It is your opportunity to have a major input in how coaching resources are used in the club.



Margi

2020 PaddleNSW Award Recipients

Allan Newhouse, Masters Paddler of the Year

Allan really embodies the spirit of masters marathon paddling in NSW.

Despite living on the South Coast, he is a regular at marathon races and in the 2019 series was one of only a handful of paddlers to achieve a 100% participation medal.

He won his division (Div 12) in the series, lining up alongside much younger

paddlers in the process, and while he clearly has a competitive edge is always adamant that the best bit about paddling is the community and camaraderie.

He is an unmissable sight out on the water in his handcrafted wooden C1. If

2020 Marathon Nationals had taken place, he would have been the oldest NSW paddler at 74, yet was already drumming up friendly rivalry with interstate C1 paddlers up to 10 years younger than him!



Allan Newhouse in his handcrafted C1 at a 2019 marathon race.

Race reports

Morison 50 – Bob Collins

On Saturday 31 October '20, PaddleNSW held the inaugural Morison 50 on the Hawkesbury River at Windsor. It was an out and back course heading downstream and paddlers could choose from 3 distances: 50 km, 24 km or 12 km.

Richard Fox and Pete Connolly in singles and Danielle and me in our double, chose 50 km, while John Preston in a single and Allan Newhouse in his beautiful hand crafted Canoe chose 12km.

As we were not allowed in the race area until 90 minutes prior to our start, we left Canberra at the respectable hour of 10:00 a.m., which turned out to be a rather poor choice of time. On the drive up, the mother of all storms hit and on the 4 lane M7, ALL lanes stopped! Cars were pulling over everywhere and many just stopped under the shelter of bridges in all lanes and would not move. Luckily everyone was sensible and just waited.

At Windsor it was so sunny and warm that in my thermal top I had to sit in the shade.



Everyone was saying they did not know what wear. We checked *Willy Weather* and it showed all of the storms had passed, so we wore one thermal layer.

(**Simon Stenhouse** – former BGCC member- wore nothing but a PFD on top! Not a good choice in the end.)

Organisation seemed great and we were told the café in the park would stay open until 10:00 p.m. to cater for tired, sore paddlers. Yeah right!!

The race turned out to be a nightmare, particularly for the 50 km distance paddlers.

The 50 km start for we average-speed paddlers was at 3:00 p.m. with the fast paddlers going off at 4:00 p.m. The 24 km at 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. and 12 km paddlers went off at 7:00 p.m.

I understand that by the time the shorter distance paddlers started, the unpredicted storms had passed through.

John Preston looking as slick as ever at the finish of 12 km, in the dark.





With Danielle and me, the tide was with us on the way out, we were paddling strongly and got in front of most of our field of average-speed paddlers by about the 21 km mark. (There were 3 or 4 Epics and a K1 that we were never going to get near).

We had a conga line for a while.

At about the 15 km mark the storms blew in: thunder and lightning off to our left; heavy rain and strong winds right in our face! I like the wind, but this was ridiculous!

Richard Fox – no rain here!



Pete Connolly – welcome back to distance paddling.

At 25 km we started looking for the turnaround buoy and the safety boat that was the marker. At 26 km we were still looking and at 27 km still looking - and could see Sackville in the distance. At 27.5 km a safety rubber-duckie came roaring past yelling at us to turn around; apparently technical problems meant they had not put out the 25 km turnaround marker.

The boats in front of us got turned around at 30 km. One guy was busting his gut to get line honours – so much for that! However not only did they turn us around, but they turned the whole field around regardless of where they were; so all of the boats we had been working hard to pass were now up to 2 km in front of us...

Everyone was shattered and most just cruised back as their whole race, target-times etc. were gone. Some were philosophical about it and some just pissed off. We were against the tide all the way back and struggled to get over 8.5 km/hr – by then we did not care we just wanted to get back. To make it worse, it rained on and off all the way back. The poor old SUP-boarders in our start had it harder than us, even if they did not do full distance.

It was as hard as a full Hawkesbury, simply because of the constant storms and rain.

I noticed these photos being taken at the 6 and 12 turnaround points. Funnily enough, no-one took any photos at the 25 km turnaround point.

Danielle and I decided to drive back to Canberra that night and finally rolled into Canberra at 1:30 a.m.

The café at Windsor? Yep, it did not stay open until 10:00 p.m. as promised and nothing was open on the highway on the way home— even Macca's was closed!

Would we do it again next year? Probably.

Bob Collins

Morison 50 – 12km Report, Allan Newhouse

Those of us who chose to paddle the 12km course certainly had an easier time than those who opted for 50 km or 24 km. I think I had to deal with more issues before I got on the water than during the race itself.

Like many paddlers I kept a close eye on the weather forecast in the week leading up to the inaugural Morison 50 on 31st October and was pleased to see that the forecast gradually improved as the days passed. It was beginning to look as if the 12 km paddlers starting at 7 PM might avoid the drenching that appeared likely earlier in the week.

I was thankful that I wasn't on the water at the time I was driving up the Princes Highway about 100 km north of Tuross Head. For a short time, the rain was so heavy that a number of cars decided it was safer to pull over to the side of the road rather than risk continuing in such poor visibility. Once we left that heavy rain behind, I was pleased to see that there were patches of blue sky in the direction that we were headed.

As we got closer to Windsor, at a time when three of the four start times had passed and half the competitors were already on the water, there was another downpour accompanied by strong winds. I was told by one of the 50 km canoe paddlers that during that storm, the wind was so bad that there was nothing he could do to prevent his canoe being blown from one side of the river to the other.

On the road into Windsor from the south, there is a low spot in the road where it dips under the railway. The rain had flooded that underpass so that it was necessary to drive through about 300mm of water.

Light rain was still falling as I registered and I was told I would need to put the back of the canoe under the registration tent so that the officials could get it dry enough to tape the chemical light stick to the back deck. Since I had planned to use duct tape to attach my compulsory white light to the front deck, I had to devise a way to get things dry enough for the tape to stick even as the rain persisted.

Light rain continued to fall as the 7 PM start time drew near, so I converted a one litre plastic milk bottle into a bailer. I knew from experience; just how much rainwater can collect in a canoe and I knew the effect it can have on stability.

The field in the 7 PM start were mostly over 50s and five of them were doubles, but as there were no age divisions for SUPs and canoes, I was entered as an Open C1 paddler. Back when I paddled two very wet Hawkesbury Classics, like almost everyone else, my wet weather gear was a plastic garbage bag with one hole for my head and two more for my arms. However for races up to two or three hours, I prefer just to wear wool as it remains warm enough when wet.

By the time I started, the rain was quite light. That was good because I didn't need to use my improvised bailer, but it meant I was overdressed and got quite hot. I had been depending on being very wet to maintain a comfortable temperature.

Pre-race advice was that for most of us, the tide would turn as we got to our respective turning buoys, but I was convinced that the extra flow in the river would delay or negate the incoming tide. Unfortunately once on the water, I found it difficult to put into practice what I believed would be the best course to reduce the disadvantage of paddling back upstream.

I was quite happy with my progress downstream. Fading light and drops of water on the screen made it difficult to read my GPS, but I know I often saw speeds between 10 and 10.5 km/h. After rounding the turning buoy, all my calculations about what the river flow would be told me that I should stick close to the bank and keep an eye out for the trees I had seen in the water on the trip downstream. However, a combination of not wanting to get tangled in trees and the need to cross the river to shorten the course as it turned left and then right meant that I spent more time out in the current than I should have. I couldn't see my GPS and I didn't ever have other



Allan Newhouse about to round the buoy before heading back upstream in the darkness. Photo: Ian Wrenford

paddlers near enough to compare speeds to work out whether I was better off closer to the bank. It was only later when I spoke to other paddlers who were able to read their GPS, that it became obvious that I spent far too much time in water that was knocking at least 1km/h off the speed I might have done closer to the bank.

On the last bend before sighting the bridge near the finish, I found myself just a couple of metres from the right hand bank. Luckily at that time I was slowly being overtaken by a group of paddlers from one of the longer courses. One of their group had drifted across towards me when his companions started frantically calling for him to move left. While I couldn't see any problem ahead, I thought it prudent to follow him in veering several metres to the left. Had I not done so, I would have run into the branches of a dead tree that stuck out quite a few metres into the river.

After the race, I somehow managed to delete my GPS data before I had a chance to look at it, but I suspect that my time of 1:36:21 consisted of about 35 or 40 minutes going downstream and about an hour fighting back upstream. I finished about seven minutes behind one of the SUPs and about the same time ahead of the other SUP with a couple of single kayakers further behind. As one of the doubles was less than six minutes ahead of me, obviously I was not the only one who struggled a bit in the conditions or took the wrong course back upstream.

I believe the plan is to make this an annual event, in which case I hope to be back again next year.

Good news for the Windsor Paddlesports Club

I came across this article on the PaddleNSW website. Congratulations to the Windsor Club – Bob Collins

Windsor Paddlesports Club Inc. has been successful in securing a grant for \$801,218 under the Greater Sydney Sports Facility Grant Funding program for the construction of a multi-purpose paddlesports facility which will house water craft storage, change rooms, amenities, a meeting room, and kitchen. The building is to be located within the grounds of Macquarie Park in Windsor on the beautiful Hawkesbury River on land donated by Hawkesbury City Council.



“This was the third time that our Club had made an application for grant funding through this program, and I guess you could say “third time lucky”. Our club has been operating out of a small brick shed and two containers for a number of years, until the middle of last year when the shed was demolished as it was considered structurally unstable”.

It is envisaged that with the completion of the facility, a number of paddlesport enthusiasts will be attracted to join our Club, which is why last year our name changed from ‘Windsor Canoe Club’ to ‘Windsor Paddlesports Club’, so that we can involve paddle boarders, dragon boaters, or any other form of paddlesport water craft.”

Garry Baldry - Windsor Paddlesports Club

Grundy's New Kayak: A Lamentation



Unshort and unlight
On a fourby so lifted,
This Yak took invention
To rack unassisted.

The straps are all tensioned
I know they won't fail
Yet when I take corners
It wags like a tail.

I must fit a cradle
Or at least know I oughta,
Before this new kayak
Shall safely see water

The parts I have ordered
Can be user-fitted
But Covid delays
Have now left me embittered.

Though Spring days are sunny
My new paddling sled
Still just sulks under dust
In the dark of my shed.

Moved the MaxTrax off the tack back

Fit the Yak Rack to the hardback

Now the yak rack gets the strap, Mac

Fit the yak back to the yak rack

Makin comeback at the Yak Shack,

Got some Yak slack gotta pay back

Gonna push back like a smokestack

Gotta give back just to get back,

Never hold back, never pull back

You can fall back, you can stand back

You can kick back like a sad sack

With the wisecrack and the cognac

While I win back from the feedback

Like a hatchback on a dirt track

Like a half-back with a six pack

Like a flapjack on a dishrack

Like a knapsack on the tarmac

Like a macaque with a face pack

Yo.



Thankyou to all contributors to this edition of Blazing Paddles. If you have items you would like to contribute for the December 2020 edition please get in touch sue_702@yahoo.com