

BLAZING PADDLES

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As you all would be well aware, the blue-green algae on lakes Burley Griffin and Ginninderra has interrupted our recreational and training paddling since mid February. A few hardy souls braved the algae to continue training for the NSW Winter marathon series, with John Preston and Russell Lutton being successful in achieving a 2nd place each in their events at the recent NSW State Championships.

John Preston and Gabrielle Hurley then travelled to the Gold Coast to compete in the National Championships – Gabrielle won her race and John was beaten into 2nd place by just under 5 seconds! Congratulations on a great effort.

Hopefully, the algae will disappear with the cooler weather and we can reclaim the river and the lake in time for the pleasant paddling weather we experience in winter!

The algae forced us to cancel the Autumn lake recreational paddle, however we are working on a joint paddle from Nelligen with the Bay Adventure Kayak Club. Being locals, I am sure they can show us some great sights on their river. Hopefully this will take place towards the end of June 2009.

**NEWSLETTER OF THE
BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE
CLUB INC.**

WWW.BGCC.ORG.AU

**PO BOX 341 JAMISON
CENTRE ACT**

The extension plans to our shed have not yet passed the National Capital Authority as apparently there is a section within the ACT Government that acts as the 'custodian' of the asset that is owned by the ACT Government!!! We are ploughing through this one at the moment, on our way to the ACT Government's Planning Authority – what joy!

On a brighter note, Bruce Fisher, a Director of the architect company Collard Clarke Jackson Canberra Pty Ltd in Mitchell, halved his quoted fee for our shed plans resulting in a considerable saving to our Club. If anyone is looking for an architect, I can recommend this company.

Unfortunately, the possums have found another way into our shed and all attempts by a possum expert and ourselves, have so far failed to keep them out. We will keep trying. In the meantime, I am thinking of buying 30 or 40 mousetraps and placing them along the ledges in the shed and in the K4 – it may discourage them!

At our AGM on 20 April 09, we managed (just) to elect a Committee, the main change being a new Treasurer. Jacqueline Wicks had served 2 years and was required to stand down. Our thanks to Jacqueline for her hard work and our congratulations to new Treasurer, Russell Murphy.

Hopefully, I will have some better news on the Shed extension soon.

Bob Collins
President

We'd like to thank and acknowledge the great work done by John Lockie over the last few years as triathlon coordinator

Collard Clarke Jackson Canberra Pty Ltd

- **Architecture**
- **Ecological and Sustainable Design**

- **Interior Design**
- **Masterplanning**
- **Site Planning**
- **Educational Planning**
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CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE -
www.bgcc.org.au its still not quite finished - still needs a little fine tuning however you can keep up to date with what is going on and don't forget to sign up for the **FORUM**.

The website will start to replace Blazing Paddles for information, minutes of meetings and race results. The forum will be a place to let others know when and who is out training, touring or planning, as well as discussions on ideas or events etc.

But it will only work if you use it!! Please send in any thoughts you have about the lake closure - how has it effected you? We will be putting together a letter to send to the ACT Govt, and would love your input.



***Interested in a warm and algae free
paddling environment over winter?***

Canoe Polo is played every Wednesday night at Tuggeranong Pool from 7.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. Polo is a fun way of keeping up paddling skills over winter. If you would like to try a new type of paddling contact Sue at:

suerobb7@hotmail.com. All you need are swimmers, shorts, rash-shirt/t-shirt, pool entry fee and BGCC membership. Club gear is available for use.

2009 Canoe Polo Nationals

In preparation for the 2009 Oceania Canoe Polo Championships and the World Masters Games in October, the 2009 Australian National Canoe Polo Championships were held at Penrith over Easter. The event was organised by Canberra Canoe Polo. Thank you to Rowan Hartcher, James Deakin, Michael Taylor, Roly Mangos, Steve Harmer and Jason Downey.

A permanent polo field has been constructed adjacent to the Whitewater Stadium. The Nationals provided a great opportunity to test the venue with most players agreeing that they couldn't ask for more. The field is available for use by all paddlers when the Whitewater Stadium is open.

Teams from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia participated as well as representatives from Western Australia in draft teams. The Canberra Men's team was placed sixth.

The Nationals were the selection event for those wishing to represent Australia at the **2009 Oceania championships**. The following Canberra Canoe Polo players were selected: James Deakin, Jason Downey, Roly Mangos, Michael Taylor, Rowan Hartcher, Steve Harmer and Sue Robb.

Penrith Whitewater Stadium 23 May 2009

There will be a club trip to Penrith Whitewater Stadium on Saturday 23 May. The course will be operating from 10.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. and possibly longer if there are sufficient raft bookings. If you wish to participate please contact Sue at:

suerobb7@hotmail.com.

Beginner Canoe Polo Sessions

Over the winter months canoe polo will be conducting beginner sessions, if you are interested please contact Sue at: suerobb7@hotmail.com

MARATHON CONVENOR'S REPORT

Highlights:

Congratulations are extended to Russell Lutton and John Preston who earned hard fought silver medals at the State Championships held at Forster.

Full results can be found on the PaddleNSW website.

www.paddlensw.org.au

Gabrielle Hurley won gold at the National Titles held over Easter on the (lack of) Sunshine Coast. Gabrielle won decisively whereas John Preston earned silver losing once again to Craig Dodd from the Central Coast by 4 seconds (exactly the same as the State titles right down to the time gap).

Full results can be found on the Australian Canoeing website.
www.canoe.org.au

Quantum Kayaks Marathon 10 Series

RACE 2 Berry.

PaddleNSW adopted some of the changes to the series that were mooted at the forum at Forster. Hence online entries and improved facilities at the venue were features of race 2. Unfortunately the weather Gods seemed to be down on us and once again strong wind and rain made life difficult for paddlers and officials.

Club highlights:

Jason Rantall's hard training paid off when he won Div 2 holding off a pair from ICC who spiced up the proceedings by adopting some sledging tactics.

In Div 5 Russell Lutton (5th) and Richard Fox (6th) dueled with Lyle Meade (4th) from WCC to all finish within 3 seconds of each other. Robert Peters also had a good race (8th). Russell and Richard gained promotion to Div 4. Well done lads! Alex and Sarah Zeller combined well for 14th.

Div 6 was hard fought as usual with good results for BGCC members. Margi Bohm(7th), Craig Kentwell (9th), Paul Hartlipp (18th), Patricia Ashton and Helen Tongway 24th.

Full results can be found on the PaddleNSW website.
www.paddlensw.org.au

Quantum Kayaks Marathon 10 Series



Race 4: Lane Cove Sunday 31/05/09
(new venue for race 4.)

Race 5: Windsor Saturday 20/06/09

For more info refer to PaddleNSW website

www.paddlensw.org.au

Canberra Marathon.

After a spectacular race on Lake Burley Griffin a number of issues were raised by various people and John Harmer as the race co-ordinator has written a response and seeks feedback. Perhaps the new forum section of our website could be used to discuss various opinions pertaining to this issue.

CHAOS ON THE LAKE.

There are, of course, different views to mine of the events of Saturday 7th February during the first of the NSW Marathon Series races. The Chairman of the NSW Marathon Committee prevailed and the decision was made to cancel the race about half way through because of the dangerous conditions.

I inspected the course during the early stages of the race from two vantage points. One from between the bridges and again from Yarralumla opposite Black Mountain Peninsula. I could see the conditions were difficult but did not justify cancelling the race. Most paddlers I watched were making reasonable progress in the conditions.

All the paddlers who did not withdraw from the race and paddled through that dangerous part of the lake were disappointed to have completed their 10, 15 or 20 km course to find their efforts were not recognised.

The race was not “stopped” it was simply declared a non-race and about 160 paddlers were still out on the lake in the conditions to make their way back to the finish line.

We were criticised from several sources because we insisted that each paddler carry (not wear) a PFD. There is a new rule that a PFD is not essential if paddlers are within 400m of land. A long way to swim if you are tipped out of your boat in rough water. Our insistence was vindicated by the number of people who paddled to the finish line wearing their PFD.

Please let me know, if you were out there on the 7th February, should the race have been cancelled or confined to laps of the river? I know several people capsized and several withdrew on seeing the conditions but the bulk of the 133 boats taking part actually finished the course. Please let me know.

The great irony is that because of the expected 40 degree temperature for the day I wanted the race to be confined to the river to protect paddlers from the dangers of heat stress. I was persuaded to change my mind by you the paddlers.

John Farmer

A Day In The Water: Race 1.

By John Preston

It was with some trepidation that I launched the TK onto Molonglo Reach a good hour later than I and a hundred or so other paddlers had expected. The trepidation I felt was due to a number of factors. Firstly I had struggled to recover from the Murray Marathon. The physical

wounds had healed but I still felt lethargic and had been struggling at training. A hard 20 km was the last thing I felt like doing. Secondly my attention had been drawn to the movement of the trees further down the river. It was obvious that the wind was picking up. The trees were swaying violently as strong gusts did their best to dislodge every leaf. Adult birds were nailing their young to the horizontal branches in an attempt to keep them out of Victoria. Even a light wind on Lake Burley Griffin is not good for paddlers and the strong contingent of locals were well aware of the potential problems that would be awaiting them when they tried to cross the lake. Paddlers from other clubs warmed up seemingly oblivious to the rapidly changing conditions. Warming up was easy as the temperature was quickly heading towards its predicted maximum of 40 degrees. Blue green algae had threatened to close the lake earlier in the week and rumours abounded about its continued presence. Any number of amateur biologists were keen to frighten anyone who would listen to their predictions of nausea, headache, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, gastroenteritis, muscle weakness, pneumonia and paralysis should one actually be unfortunate enough to fall into the water and accidentally imbibe.

Once on the water apprehension faded into thoughts of the racing to come and where to position one-self for the start. After a further hold up, due to the timing clock chucking a wobbly, we were off. I'd been practising my starts and got off from the line towards the front of the pack. As usual, over the next couple of hundred metres, the slow starters in fast boats worked their way past me and I tucked in behind them hoping to hang on

for as long as possible. About 50 metres from the hospice I saw the first of many paddlers roll into the depths of the cyanoprokaryote. The victim looked bemused as paddlers pounded past, some pretending to have no peripheral vision whatsoever therefore justifying their lack of acknowledgment of the paddler's plight, others feeling they should ask if he was ok hoping they wouldn't have to actually stop and render assistance.

"You ok mate? The more stable boats are just behind us" emanated from a kayak that was 10 metres long and 1.5 metres wide at its narrowest point.

My race tactic, of hanging onto the pack for as long as possible, lasted for about 100 metres into East Basin. At this time the fleet was being buffeted by a strong gusty wind which was slightly side on to the shortest line to Kings Avenue Bridge. The waves were close together, peaking and breaking over the bow. The packs seemed to break up as peoples' ability to steer straight was tested. I decided it was best to seek my own section of water rather than risk a collision. I coped quite well with the conditions not really feeling in danger of a dunking. Some water had broken into the kayak and I made good use of the foot pump to get rid of it. A few more kayaks rolled over as they straightened up near to the bridge pylons. It was here that things became serious. The waves were steeper and were running over the deck and smashing into the cowling around the cockpit. Pity I hadn't thought to use a spray deck. The bow of my TK dropped as wave after wave started to fill the kayak. The foot pump couldn't cope with the volume of water. The waves were so steep they couldn't be paddled over, just smashed through. As a consequence the footplate area was full of water which lowered the bow further

and made it easier for more water to get in. I struggled into Central Basin hoping to find a calmer section where I might be able to make a concerted effort to get some of the water out. No such opportunity arose. Three successive waves broke straight into the cockpit. The volume of water in the front of the kayak pushed the nose down 2 feet into the tea coloured lake. More waves kept the boat on its slow downward path. I braced with the paddle as the kayak headed for the bottom, the angle of the sinking was similar to that of the Titanic. As the tempest roared strains of "My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion could be heard mixed with the laughter from fellow paddlers. I got to the point where the kayak was on such a steep angle that the back of my head was actually touching the number affixed to the rear deck and the trapped air behind me started escaping with the sounds and force akin to a flatulent water buffalo. I feared that the kayak might just sink totally despite the floatation aboard. I then swam out. A number of paddlers in double Mirages were kind enough to point out that the more stable boats were just behind them should I require any assistance. It was quite easy getting to the wall and the lake bottom was surprisingly devoid of broken bottles and the other nasties one might have expected to tread upon. Emptying the kayak and climbing the ladder was not easy as the wind threatened to snatch the kayak out of my grasp and send it to Kingston foreshore.

So there I was on the path outside the National Gallery contemplating walking back across the bridge to the safety of the north side of East Basin. It was then that the effect of the 40 degree day became apparent. The soles of my feet began sizzling like raw ham steak on a

bbq. The only way back to Molonglo Reach was to climb back down the ladder and re-enter the maelstrom. Relaunching proved difficult as I was continually smashed by waves which kept pushing me into the wall. I pushed off the wall with my right hand only to half fill the cockpit as the cowling dipped under a wave. Despite the inundation I made an attempt to paddle across the lake. Unfortunately the weight of the water in the kayak made steering nearly impossible and the kayak rounded up into the howling wind and once again filled to the brim. Into the briny I went. Using the kayak as a kickboard I “swam” the length of Kings Avenue Bridge and eventually found sanctuary inside East Basin. During the 20 minute swim I thought about the calorie content of blue green algae and whether it could enter one’s person via any orifice that was now subject to immersion. My apprehension rose when I recalled reading that contact with blue green-algae could create problems such as skin rashes, swollen lips, eye irritation, ear

ache, sore throat, hay fever symptoms, asthma and possibly skin tumours. Pushing these thoughts aside I joined the throng of competitors who were making their way back to base each one with a survival story of their own.

JP

RECREATIONAL PADDLE

Patricia has kept club members well informed about the club’s recreational paddles via the website. Check out the report on the recent trip to the Kangaroo Valley under the Latest News column on the club’s homepage. PaddleNSW has a number of interesting recreational paddles coming up, see below.



Recreation Paddles

Sun 21/06/09 Nepean Gorge and the Blue Mountains NP

Sat 25/07/09 Central Coast Exploratory/ Brisbane Waters NP

Sat 26/09/09 Spring Spectacular – Canberra from water level (our last effort was thwarted by the dreaded blue–green algae).

See PaddleNSW website to register and for other details.

On the PaddleNSW website under 'Recreational Paddles' is information about the Murrumbidgee River Canoe Trail and the Macquarie River Canoe Trail. Both look like great fun.

Wetspot Water Sports

Get all your winter water sports needs from Wetspot Water Sports at
13/68 Wollongong St
Fyshwick ACT

Winter Special- We have the best supply of wing paddles in time for your winter training. A stock of carbon fibre Solution paddles for only \$389.00
We have 2 TK's in stock, the Sladcraft UFO Mark2 if you're after a lively faster TK, or the Rush for the traditional feel.

Don't forget your winter clothing – we'll shortly have the SHARKSKINS in stock, and we currently have a good range of booties, gloves and tops.

Triathlon Convenor

Bob has volunteered to be the Triathlon Convenor for the next season - however, as President and Shed Extension organiser we feel Bob has enough on his plate. Are there any other takers?? This can be a shared position on a roster system. Please let us know if you feel you can volunteer some time for this very important position.

Survive cold water immersion.



Sub-zero weather and very low water temperatures are just around the corner. A bit of common sense should be

applied to avoid life threatening situations developing should you take a dip. Sudden immersion in frigid water can prompt a sequence of physiological responses that increase one's chances of drowning.

Cold shock is the first response to cold water immersion. Typically the victim instantaneously begins to gasp which is followed by rapid deep breathing. This creates a situation whereby the CO₂ levels in the bloodstream decrease which can lead to confusion, dizziness and even unconsciousness. Heart rate, blood pressure and cardiac workload increases. This can precipitate fatal arrhythmias or heart attacks in susceptible people. Panic may exacerbate the situation. Cold water shock usually only lasts for a few minutes. Should you find yourself in a

situation where you suffer cold water shock remain calm and control your breathing. This will enable you to survive long enough for the next response to occur.

Once the cold shock response abates **perform the most important functions first** before you start to lose muscle function. This could be retrieving your pfd from the kayak and putting it on, or grabbing your kayak as a support.

Functional disability is the next likely response to cold water immersion. Providing the initial shock is survived, the victim will quickly start to find it more difficult to swim and tread water as muscles and nerves in the extremities cool down. Manual dexterity and grip strength decrease markedly. Victims lose the ability to grasp lifelines or floatation devices, climb ladders, or otherwise assist in their own rescue.

Should the victim remain in the water for any length of time hypothermia becomes a risk which will increase the chance of drowning. Violent and/or painful shivering, confusion, lethargy and feebleness can quickly result in submersion and death.

Don't think it can't happen to us. In winter our waterways can be dangerous. A number of club members have taken winter dips and have described similar symptoms to those above. Most were quickly out of the water and made quick recoveries. There have been incidents in Molonglo Reach and Lake Burley Griffin where paddlers have abandoned their kayaks in order to escape the water quickly. These had to be retrieved later. It is advisable to paddle close to the shoreline and to paddle in a group. Wear appropriate clothing and don't take risks. Wearing a pfd is a sensible thing to do as

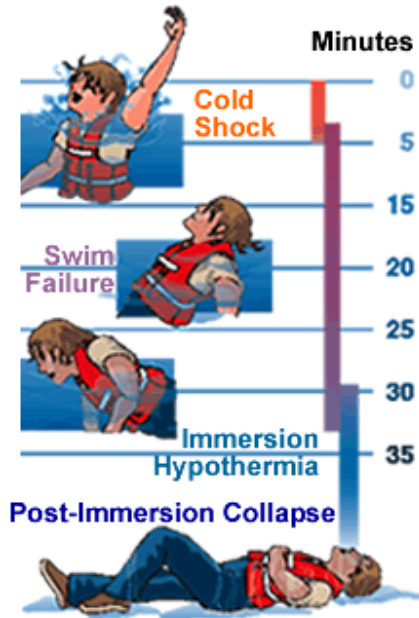
it will insulate the paddler and help keep her/him afloat. If paddling in the dark make sure you have a white light attached to the kayak.



Should you fall into frigid water try to keep your head out of the water. Gasping involuntarily with your head in the water can result in immediate drowning. If you have to swim to shore use a conservative stroke that keeps your head above the water, e.g. breaststroke. Use small movements when treading water. Should you not be able to swim to shore the focus should be on slow heat loss. Your pfd should allow you to assume heat-conserving postures (hands crossed over chest, arms pressed closely to sides, knees drawn towards chest, ankles crossed). Remain calm and control your breathing. Obviously you should get out of the water as quickly as you can. The rate of body heat loss is 25 times greater in water than in air.

Victims of cold water immersion should be monitored closely. Cardiac arrest can occur if core temperature continues to fall. The victim should dress in warm, dry clothing and should lie down if dizzy or incoherent. Seek appropriate medical help where necessary.

Stages of Cold Water Immersion



Some of the information in this article has been adapted from **How To Survive Cold Water Immersion in Winter Sports** by Stephen Christensen.

John Preston



Steve Hanley & mum Sue winning the 2009 Mother's Day Mayhem in 14:48, just 15 seconds ahead of Helen and Marge Tongway.

(Note the clear waters of Yerrabi Pond.) Afterwards those present enjoyed tea and cake on the shore-line, before heading off to respective luncheon dates.



Canoe / Kayak

Canoe Polo 10 – 12 October 2009
Penrith Whitewater Stadium

Marathon 13 -14 October 2009
Nepean River, Penrith

Slalom 15 October 2009
Penrith Whitewater Stadium

Sprint 16 – 18 October 2009
Sydney International Regatta Centre,
Penrith

See www.2009worldmasters.com for more information.



Russell Lutton (foreground) start of Berry Marathon 2009

Events later in 2009:

City to Surf 9/8/09
Myall Classic 26/9/09
World Masters Games (Sydney)
Mid October
Hawkesbury Classic 24/10/09
24 hour relay Canberra 28/11/09
YMCA Murray Marathon 27/12/09