



BLAZING PADDLES

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**NEWSLETTER OF THE
BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE
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President's Report

It's been another busy couple of months at the BGCC. We've done some very good things:

- Hosted a very successful Marathon 9 race
- Run a successful Burley Griffin Bash
- Had great results from our representatives at the Marathon Nationals
- Had a good time with our mothers (or children) at the Mothers Day Mayhem
- Had Gabrielle Hurley win Mature Sports Star of the month for April.
- Started making preparations for the club's assault on the Hawkesbury for 2011.

None of this happens without a lot of effort from committee members and other volunteers. So thanks must go to, in particular, John Preston, Bob Collins, Margi Bohm, Alan Clark and Helen Tongway for organising these events. Thank you too for helping out as well.

Over the next couple of months I am going to pray that the lake does not freeze over, but if you are planning to do the Hawkesbury or the Murray, now is a good time to get a plan in place for the race, or improve your technique. It's also a good time for a reminder to make sure you are paddling with appropriate gear, especially warm clothing at this time of year. A PFD is also a good idea. It's also not too late to join me on the Riverland Paddling Marathon on the June Long Weekend. High flows are expected, so it will not only be an

opportunity to see an interesting part of the river, but also to do it comparatively easy.

And don't forget our **21st Birthday Dinner on the 24th June** at the Hellenic Club, Woden. The club has come of age, and you will get to see many of your favourite people, wearing long pants, possibly for the first time.

See you on the ice,

Russell

Congratulations Gabrielle!



Our very own Australian Champion! After putting in the hard yards training over the last few months Gabrielle had a well deserved win at the Nationals in the Women's 50+ K1, and would have to be a good chance in Singapore.

Boat Captain's Report

Welcome to winter! What a sudden change it is to get up super early in the morning and go paddling in minus 7. I have even received reports of ice forming on the boat while paddling, and who says Burley Griffin Paddlers aren't tough. What happened to balmy mornings?

First and foremost I would like to congratulate all of our paddlers on their recent

achievements at the time trials and the recent nationals, especially Gabrielle Hurley and her national championship. I am also happy to report that activity is increasing in the ultra marathon area with the now impending Hawkesbury race. Remember to keep an eye out on emails and websites for information nights. The club is seeking maximum participation in this event. We want to show the rest of the paddling fraternity that we are a force to be reckoned with. To that end we will again be attending in force – as a team of paddlers, and, a team of supporters as part of our fixed land crew arrangements. This was very successful last year. As a paddler it was a delight to have all of my needs catered for and to have an incredible support base at the end. The bacon and egg burgers at the finish were the icing on the cake! Watch this space – I reckon we can do it better!

WHITEWATER CRAFT

With thanks to the white water enthusiasts our club now has possession of two brand new boats. The two little red craft do have some special rules associated with their use. White water is more dangerous and therefore we have an obligation to be more careful with how we use this equipment. The boats are in the care of our two white water Instructors, Alan ‘Nobby’ Clarke and James Suthern. If you are seeking the use of such boats please make your request to me. I will then pass it on to them. The boats are not to be taken out of the shed at all without prior permission and have rules associated with their use.

FLEET MANAGEMENT

As you have seen we are looking for feedback on fleet management. I urge you, if you haven’t already, to provide me with your comments either via email or through the forum. I need this information by the end of the financial year so as to assist the

committee in making future plans. I look forward to your responses.

In a final comment, there appears to be a bit of a Murray Challenge starting up already – with the possibility of about 4 doubles crews pitting against each other. Love to see more – and there may even be a boat captain looking for a partner for this year’s race.....

See ya on the water

Darryl

Flat Water Convenor’s Report

The racing season has been underway for many weeks now and as usual our members have been right up there competing in a number of racing formats. Results of the latest rounds of the Harbour Series, ACT Multi-Sport Rogaine, Vajda Marathon 9 Series, The Burley Bash, The Australian National Titles and The Bridge to Beach can be found below.

Sunday time trials are proving to be popular and competitive racing has been the order of the day.



Race 4 – Sydney Harbour Challenge 2/4/2011
Peter Garbutt 1:19:45 9th in 40plus men’s surf ski (27th overall)
Rohan Evans 1:28:07 11th in 30plus men’s surf ski (48th overall).



Rohan Evans (foreground) competing in Race 2 of the Harbour Series.
Race 5 – Rose Bay Challenge 30/4/2011

Rohan Evans 1:26:58 11th in 30plus men's surf ski (50th overall)

Race 6 – Pittwater Challenge 14/5/2011

Peter Garbutt 1:17:46 6th in 40plus men's surf ski (17th overall)

Rohan Evans 1:23:07 7th in 30plus men's surf ski (38th overall).



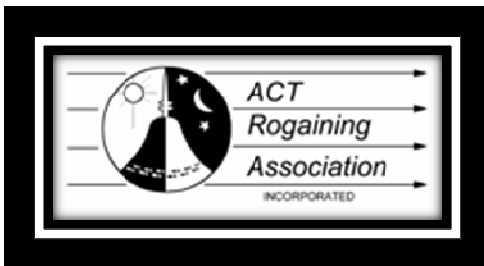
On a beautiful day at Googong Robyn Robertson forges ahead leaving Roslyn Hickson and Paul Hartlipp trying to get on her wash.



Two of our members took on this 155km single day challenge on April 10th. Gary Rake and Gary Rolfe had mixed fortunes on the day. Gary Rake was humming along nicely until his knees seized up and he was only able to amble rather than run. Although this cost him a lot of time his resilience and will to overcome adversity saw him complete the course in 10:00:21 which earned him 120th position overall and 28th in the 18-39 male category. Gary Rolfe was a DNF after his kayak suffered a breakdown which could not be fixed. Gary was well placed at the time but took the disappointment on the chin and looked at the positives – 2nd fastest in one of the bike legs. Had bad luck not intervened both Garys would have featured high up in the finishing order.

Marysville 2 Melbourne included:

- 19km Sholtz trail run
- 50km Chum Creek road ride
- 40km 2XU road ride
- 15km Salomon Trail Run



The ACT Rogaining Association conducted a multi-sport race on the reopened Googong Dam and surrounds. Our members Julie Quin and David Baldwin organised the event. A comprehensive report can be found elsewhere in this edition of Blazing Paddles.
BGCC Members' Results

Aaron Coles / Steve Hanley 1st Overall and 1st in category.

Danielle Winslow / Gary Rolfe 5th overall and 2nd in category.

Lee Rice / Michael McCusk 9th overall and 5th in category.

Roslyn Hickson / Robin Robertson / Paul Hartlipp 15th overall and 7th in category.

Full results available on the ACT RA website.

- 15km Outer Edge River paddle
- 16km Yarra's Edge river paddle



Marathon 9

Race 2 Molonglo River – Canberra

A large number of club members took on our home marathon course on the picturesque Molonglo River and East Basin.

See report below.

RESULTS

20km -Division 2

Mark Halpin 2nd in 1:39:55

Brendan Cowled 6th in 1:50:30

20km-Division 3

Randall Fitzsimon 4th in 1:47:20

20km-Division 4

Adam Scott 5th in 1:49:31

Richard Fox 7th in 1:51:20

Gabrielle Hurley 10th in 1:54:00

20km- Division 5

Rachelle Irving 3rd in 1:56:22

Gordon Burns 4th in 1:56:24

Craig Kentwell 11th in 1:57:35

Paul Hartlipp 13th in 1:58:42

Alan Clark 14th in 1:59:43

Ben Rattray 17th in 2:03:49

20km- Division 6

Danielle Winslow 5th in 2:04:28

Bob Collins 6th in 2:04:29

Patricia Ashton 9th in 2:06:06

15km – Division 7

Russell Lutton 5th in 1:26:06

Robin Robertson 12th 1:48:06

Jay Crawford 13th in 1:53:51

10km – Division 9

Barry Marshall 1st in 1:00:14

Carolyn Williams 12th in 1:10:17

Cara Sheldon (Junior) 13th in 1:11:22

Helen Tongway 14th in 1:12:00

Jessie Flint 16th in 1:14:24

Mackayla Clark (Junior) 17th in 1:15:50

Vanessa Palmer 19th in 1:19:51

Race 3 Nepean River – Penrith

A solid number of club members took on the weed on the Penrith marathon course. See report below.

RESULTS

20km -Division 1

Justin Channells/Gary Rake 4th 1:47:54

20km-Division 3

Randall Fitzsimon 8th in 1:53:37

20km- Division 5

Craig Kentwell 5th in 1:54:42

Alan Clark 8th in 1:59:43

John Preston 10th in 1:58:05

Paul Hartlipp 11th in 2:00:42

15km – Division 7

Russell Lutton 5th in 1:26:06

Margi Bohm 6th in 1:26:09

Robin Robertson 12th 1:41:42

10km – Division 9

Ben Rake (junior) 13th in 1:14:01

Mackayla Clark (Junior) 16th in 1:16:32

Helen Tongway 17th in 1:21:35

Carolyn Williams 21st in 1:34:00

Vajda canoes and kayaks Marathon 9 event dates for 2011.

Race 5 Sun 19th June: Wyong River, **Tacoma** (CCCC)

Race 6 Sat 23rd July: Hawkesbury River, **Windsor** (WCC)

Race 7 Sat 20th August: **Pt Hacking**, Swallow Rock Reserve (CSKC)

Race 8 Sun 11th September: **Lane Cove** River (LCRK)

Race 9 Sat 5th November: Murrumbidgee River, **Wagga Wagga** (WBCC) plus presentation on Saturday night.

The State Marathon Titles will be held at the Penrith Regatta Centre on the 2nd & 3rd of July, with Senior Singles and Junior Doubles on Saturday and Senior Doubles and Junior Singles on Sunday.



Gordon Burns 56:55 13th in Open Male Ski (52nd overall)

Russell Lutton 1:10:42 12th in Sea Kayak male (183rd overall)

Adam Scott 1:12:35 59th in Over 40's men's surf ski (194th overall)

MARATHON NATIONALS GEELONG



Comprehensive results can be found on the Australian canoeing website.



The 2011 Australian Canoe Marathon Championships were held over Easter in Geelong Victoria. Our representation was up this year with all 5 members winning medals.

SINGLES RESULTS

Gabrielle Hurley: Vet 50 Women K1

1st in 1:29:05 (17.4km)

Alan Clark: Vet 45 Men TK1

2nd in 1:56:49 (21.5km)

John Preston: Vet 55 Men TK1

2nd in 1:56:11 (21.5km)

Russell Lutton: Vet 60 Men TK1

2nd in 1:35:53 (17.4km)

Randall Fitzsimon: Vet Multi Sport/Surf Ski

2nd in 1:51:21 (17.4km)

DOUBLES RESULTS

Russell Lutton / Steve Ison (BAK) Vet 45 Men TK2 2nd
1:51:21

Alan Clark / John Preston Vet 45 Men TK2 4th
1:52:37



Off and racing at the Nationals



Russell enjoying a tight tussle for line honours in the M60 TK1



Nobby and John duelling in their TKs



Russell and Steve (BAK) heading for Silver in their M45TK2



Nobby and John initiating a port tack in the TK2

{Thanks to Carolyn for all the Nationals Photos}

John

Interviews* with BGCC paddlers who competed at nationals in Geelong

(*thanks to Gabrielle)

Paddler: John Preston

Describe your paddling background

I've been paddling for 5 years. This year was my 4th Nationals. I'm 56 and paddle a TK1. I have started to learn how to paddle a K1 and am making steady progress. My aim is to race in the K1 from now on with the ultimate goals of racing in the Nationals for the next 2 years and then going to the World Masters Games

in Italy in August 2013. In order to do this my skills in the K1 have to improve markedly. I came 2nd in the 55-60 age group in Geelong.

What motivated you to paddle nationals this year?

There are a number of reasons for paddling at the Nationals. I like to compete with paddlers of my own age in kayaks of the same class, something you don't get to do very often in this age of divisional racing. The racing is tough and uncompromising and you often compete with paddlers from different states who don't compete in our state titles or Marathon 9. Part of the attraction is the variety of venue provided by the various states. The officials add to the sense of importance by strictly applying the rules of kayak racing and weighing and measuring your kayak to make sure it conforms to international standards. There is a degree of camaraderie with other members of your state team which was emphasised more this year and added a further dimension to the whole event. You also compete on the same course as the elite in our chosen sport.

How was the start, middle or end of the race?

Despite being very nervous I got off to a flying start. Although I still consider myself to be a novice I have learned the importance of not allowing anyone to escape straight from the start. I quickly got to the front and established a comfortable rhythm as the lead pack formed. This meant I could keep an eye on my opposition and be in a position to counter any attacks. Pity when the time came I didn't manage to do it, still the thinking was right.

What was your best marathon strategy in the race?

The best strategy I applied in the race was at the start of the last lap. Having lost touch with the eventual winner of my race when he got

onto the wash of a passing group of K1 paddlers I found myself fairly secure in second. My competition had faded a bit and was some 40 or 50 seconds back. I was washriding a TK paddler from one of the younger age groups and realised he was slowing. I'm not sure for how long he'd been slowing but I noticed my buffer over third place had been reduced as we turned at the 15k mark. I then attacked at a controlled pace to ensure second place was safe but also at a level which allowed me to keep some energy in reserve should I end up being challenged in the final kilometre. In the past I might not have been alert to the danger of allowing a competitor to regain time on me.

What marathon strategy did you try but it didn't work out too well in the race?

My strategy as the race progressed was to be in a position in the pack to counter any attacks and press for the win in the last kilometre. It failed. The eventual race winner was able to get onto the wash of some passing K1 paddlers who were moving very fast. He had better explosive speed than me at this stage of the race and having initially feigned disinterest in them he suddenly jumped onto their wash and was able to hold them for long enough to put about 60m into me. I missed the opportunity and couldn't regain the lost time.

What did you learn from nationals?

'I suppose the lesson I learned at Nationals was to be on guard and concentrate for the whole race. Things can happen very quickly and sometimes little can be done once the damage has been done. I was nonchalantly paddling along according to my race plan, conserving energy, visualising a run for the line where I held off the opposition to win and content that I had gaffed my rival of the last few Nationals. Unfortunately I wasn't alert enough and was probably too conservative

which allowed someone else to gain the initiative.

Magic moment or disaster?

I didn't have a magic moment in the race. The finish was anticlimactic because I was well beaten into second and third place was some time back so there was no sprint for the line or anything. A bit of a letdown actually when compared to last year when I was involved in a sprint finish where I came out on top.

Paddler: Russell Luton

Describe your paddling background

I decided to race in the TK 1 (M60) and TK2 (M45) classes at nationals. The outcome of the races were a silver medal in the TK1 race and a silver medal in the TK2 race. I have been paddling for over 10 years and passionately dislike paddling TKs. However, if you are going to drive a 1,600km round trip to do class-based racing, you want to be sure that you at least finish the race upright, and for me that means TKs and lots of whinging.

What motivated you to paddle nationals this year?

There is nothing quite like doing a regatta at this level. It is scary, exhilarating and very motivating. You learn a lot about yourself and how to improve your paddling. I also really appreciate the beautiful camaraderie, particularly among my friends from BGCC and BAK who were there.

How was the start, middle or end of the race?

At the start of the TK1 race I was very nervous – but that is part of the learning experience. I had little idea who my competition was and, having “invested” so much time and money to be at Geelong, I was determined to do as well

as I could. Stress!!! The TK2 race was fun. My co-paddler, Steve Ison from BAK, is a strong paddler and we “sync” well when we paddle together.

What was your best marathon strategy in the race?

Turning strategy was crucial in both my races – but for different reasons. The TK1 turned like a truck and I had to put in so much effort to make sure I controlled the turns. It generally worked but for the last turn and I lost that race by 4 seconds after 17km. (The kayak is now at the boat builder getting a better rudder. Better late ...) Conversely, we chose Steve's TK2 (even though it was 10kg overweight) because it turned so well – in its own length almost. We passed so many boats on the turns and that got us second place.

What marathon strategy did you try but it didn't work out too well in the race?

What didn't work for me very well was trying too hard to control the TK1 race “from the front”. On reflection, I should have slowed it all down a bit and made the other bloke do more of the work to conserve my energy.

What did you learn from nationals?

In addition to the importance of paddling a kayak you can race in any conditions (even the Barwon River was remarkably lumpy at times), competing at Nationals emphasized to me how important the basics are – planning, preparation and nutrition (particularly if you are fronting up next day for another race). Race strategy and good “team” support are also crucial when you have mass starts. For example, Carolyn would always make sure I knew the boat numbers that were in my category so I knew who I was racing against and who it was okay to let get away if necessary.

Magic moment or disaster?

No disasters for me. And I took two magic moments from Nationals: one was getting okay results in both races – more relief than anything that made the experience memorable and enjoyable. The other magic moment was seeing 12-year-old Shane Ison (BAK) from tiny Nelligen on the NSW south coast win a bronze medal in his Junior U14 boys K1 race. Shane was beaten by a New Zealander and a Victorian, but I wonder what it tells us about our sport that he was the only NSW junior competitor at the 2011 Australian Canoe Marathon Championships.

Paddler: Gabrielle Hurley

What motivated you to paddle nationals this year?

I couldn't bear the thought of attending a national championships just to attend the AC marathon technical committee meeting and not paddle.

Describe either the start, middle or end of the race?

The start was good but the middle was torturous – couldn't wait for the last lap so I could end the pain, get off the water and watch the poor blokes who had to do another lap. Also I personally met the increasingly strong headwinds in the last 500 metre slow motion sprint to the end.

What was your best marathon strategy in the race?

Like all marathon races - go hard at the start and try and outlast the others and then with my magic wand get rid of the lactic acid **that has** built up in my arms and shoulders and while still lucid catch the under 16 K2 coming through from the start behind me – and hang on for that washride!

What marathon strategy did you try but it didn't work out too well in the race?

The one above ☺ which never has worked out for me at a nationals and I should probably just stop dreaming.

What did you learn from nationals?

Lesson one: its always windy when I race in marathons PLUS its always windy when I go to watch canoe marathons EQUALS do more strength work for our normal windy paddling conditions;

Lesson two: lots of boats on a marathon lap course means that its going to get really really lumpy and you can never do enough core strength work ,, never, never, never enough!

Magic moment or disaster?

Magic moment - there were about 15 masters female paddlers in the start – never seen that before at nationals ... Hoping that females are getting into kayak (K1) paddling which would be great and less lonely – I've lined up in marathon races in QLD with no masters K1 women and had to start with the open women (and there were only 2 and they were both in the national team) and open men - that was an interesting race start and I've managed to forget most of what happened after the gun went off to start J [wasn't pretty]



Congratulations Julie Quinn

First Place in the North Face 100km ultra marathon around Katoomba NSW. Julie smashed the course record by 36 minutes!

Marathon 9 Molonglo

Saturday 9th April saw Race 2 of the 2011 Paddle NSW marathon 9 series come to Canberra. Our organisers and the paddle NSW folk not only managed to put on a great race, but also secured a perfect sunny day for the occasion.

Well done to Mark, Randall, Rachelle, and Barry for picking up handy points for club, contributing to our current 6th place standing. We'll need to keep up the effort to better our 7th in place finish in the 2010 series.

The event was a solid follow up to BGCC hosting the season opener in 2010. In all we fielded 24 paddlers, over a fifth of the 114 total, and a good improvement on our contingent of 17 last year. Together the BGCC contingent paddled for almost 40 hours – it might have been enough for the Murray if we'd strung it out end-on-end?

There was plenty of competitive racing. This, despite a Preston-Dodd duel on water being ruled out with John being kept off the water by a tummy bug.

This was your correspondent's first taste of the marathon series. Racing by division was a welcome surprise.

Instead of the uniform line of K boats I'd expected, the beach and foreshore had by morning become a diverse forest of craft. All manner of boats were readied for racing. Plenty of unrestricted boats, skis and doubles. After John Harmer's briefing we were off.

Thanks to the efforts of Alan, John and a band of willing helpers we had a fine 5km loop to navigate. Oncoming boats were well separated, and I didn't hear of anyone collecting – or being collected by – any flood debris lurking beneath. The boys in the

tinnies, Darryl, Jason and Shane, kept a watchful eye on competitors.

Challenges were not entirely absent. A breeze with a bit of west in it built up chop on the section heading into the lake. Jason and Shane had ringside witness for a few spills and swims from their mooring just off the East Basin turning buoy. Still, nothing to match the tales of the 2009 race.

And so to the experience of your correspondent in his first attempt at paddling more than a 10km time trial at speed: Where better than your home port to start out with a big splash? When better than with a shiny new ski?

By 10km I was feeling pretty cocky. The wake of a seemingly perfectly-paced double from WCC helped me into a clear second place. At last I was out in front of Nobby in a race. And boy I felt good about it.

Into the third lap I was still feeling good. Very good. I had the temerity to surge a couple of times in front of the double.

At this point the mind wandered, dangerously. I started planning my sprint finish from the double, confident in having wrapped up second place. I would be on the inside at the turn; ride their wake over the shallow section; then, lifted by the roar of the crowd ... bang: victory for BGCC! ...

But no. Not on Saturday 9th April at least.

It didn't end with a bang, nor even a whimper. Just a series of Monica Seles-like grunts of each paddle stroke.

At the final turn on the lake the double got away. There was no getting it back. First the GPS reading started to dip below 10kph. Then below 9. Then the struggle really started. I reached deep into my inner tennis-player soul just to make each stroke.

Passing the beach for the final turn I gave considerable thought to emulating one of our more (in)famous Australian rowing talents. (Note to self – must seek out a doubles partner for that to work).

Then the wheels really fell off. Rounding Darryl's mark at the northeast end of the track, WCC made it one-two. Lyle breezed past in his stealth-looking black boat. Now in third, could I hold on?

With the finish line in view (thankfully BGCC's own) Rachele streaked past. And another. I snatched fifth from the jaws of second, limping across the line. But I loved every moment, and have caught the flatwater racing bug.

Well done to all our paddlers. And thanks to all who put in the hard work to make it such as successful event: the many hours hauling out snags, measuring the course and placing buoys. The organising and staffing the BBQ and food stall.

Impressively our results appeared almost instantly by email. With online entry and a pretty efficient looking set up, the PNSW marathon folk seem to have it all well sorted. I'm looking forward to some more marathon races.

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

Gordon

Marathon 9 Molonglo

Despite mooring the rescue boat at a prime fishing spot, Darryl still managed to snap a few of club members making the top turn during the Molonglo Marathon 9 race.

(BTW – There is a link on the Paddle NSW site to a Picassa album with 1,000 shots from the Molonglo race. So if you were there, and wer too fast for Darryl, don't despair, you're bound to be on the Paddle NSW site)





Marathon 9 Nepean

Western Sydney turned on perfect weather for the 3rd round of the Marathon 9 series. Racing started in the afternoon (to allow for travelling time for those from the Eastern Suburbs ☺). BGCC fielded 14 paddlers in 13 boats. It was great to see two of our Juniors, Ben and Mackalya, making the trip and putting in solid performances.

The racing was good and close in all classes and the handicapping seems to be working well, with some serious (friendly) rivalries starting to establish in most Divisions.

Alas, despite promises to the contrary, there was a fair bit of weed in the river (though nowhere near as bad as the last race of 2010).

Gary and Justin got our best result (a 4th in Div 1) and Randal impressed by making it to the Div 3 start on time – but then lost a few battles with the weeds.

Nobby and John got good starts in Div 5, with Nobby in the leading group of three which quickly thinned to one after one paddler went in and Nobby succumbed to weed – followed a lap later by John.

There was some strong intra club competition in the 15 km Div 7 as well, with Russell and Margi battling it out for 5th spot, with Russell heading Margi home by a couple of boat lengths.

Craig

BG Bash

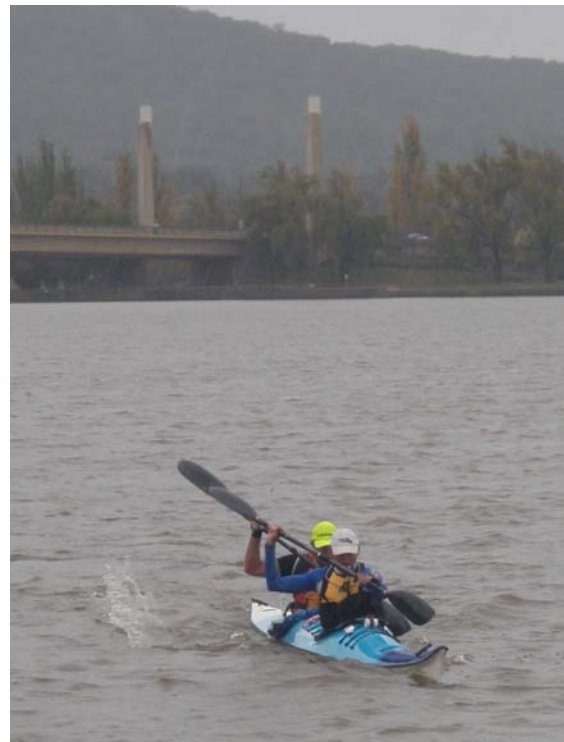
A total of 37 people in 28 boats bravely took to the water at Molonglo Reach, with 11 BGCC paddlers in 10 boats taking on the full 30 km Burley Griffin Bash distance, despite the falling rain and threat of rising winds. In fact the first three places all went to club paddlers - Adam and Russell, Geoff and Paul. Shane and Jason set a new record and lead the flotilla home on the 14 km course which swept around Springbank and Spinnaker Islands. The shorter courses (5 and 2km) stayed in the sheltered water of the river.



Start of the Bash



Gordon enjoying the drizzle after setting the OS1 record on the 14km course



Adam and Russell in (almost) perfect harmony on their way to victory and a new record in their double.

Bridge to Beach

Sydney's Bridge to Beach paddle included BGCC's own Adam, Russell and Gordon. Well done to Adam and Russell for what turned out to be an exciting and challenging event, with a nice touch of downwind and plenty of tricky swell and chop.

The spectacular 11.2km event starts right under the bridge and heads east past Fort Denison and the zoo. Then it turns left at Bradley's Head. Almost straight north for the final 6 or 7km - past the heads and entrance to middle harbour - for a finish at Manly Cove next to the ferry wharf.

By mid-week, windfinder.com's forecasts were promising an even more spectacular event: 50kph wind gusts from the southwest would turn the harbour into a downwind choppy washing-machine all the way to Manly.

Instead, on the day we got a much milder sou'easter. But we also got a substantial 2 to 4 metre sou'east groundswell coming through the heads - more of the later.

The inner harbour was nice and calm while lining up for the start. I suspected - rightly - this would not last long. Adam and I on our skis, and Russell in his speedy sea kayak, were all ready for the call.

We were off. The wake created at the start was something else. I was surfing along at 13kph while hardly paddling. High harbour walls at the narrow point under the bridge, combined with a large number of boats, meant for a terrific wash ride. And the Sydney CBD gave us good shelter from the wind - no chop yet.

Things changed rounding Bradleys Head. No more CBD windbreak. This was more like open water paddling. The sou'east wind threw up tricky side chop. A few little runners were starting to emerge, but they weren't easy to milk for extra speed. It was more a case of avoiding a stall on the back of the waves. The field spread out and it became a bit clearer who the skis I might be able to try chasing down as runs began to build.

We were hugging the western cliffs as we headed north. The entrance to Middle Harbour drew into view.

So did the heads. And so did the impact of the sou'east groundswell now starting to fill into the more exposed part of the harbour, crashing off the cliffs and rebounding into the confused harbour chop.

A father-young son double ski I'd used for a good wash ride earlier in the flat water section was the first casualty I saw - the long ski now precariously balanced on one of the rescue boats, and an excited-looking young son now enjoying the speedboat ride.

But more runs were emerging, and I started a fun tussle with a couple of skis I'd caught.

One thing I hadn't anticipated (nor warned Adam or Russell about) was a bombora breaking right in front of Middle Head, and right in the race line. Despite the high tide, enough swell was heading into and rebounding off the cliffs for the occasional swell to break. Hunching, with elbows-down, through the confused water my bunch and I went.

On the other side, the runs really opened up. I remembered why I got hooked on paddling. Myself and three other skis were now in a run-for-fun tussle.

I took a wide line into Manly Cove, hoping that would give me the chance to use more of the little swells wrapping in from the heads. It proved a good hunch. I linked up three runs to pass my marks and put a good 50m between us, ready for the finish.

As I trotted up the beach to the finish, paddle in hand, it seemed one of my marks wasn't convinced the battle was over. Suddenly he was right behind me and we were in an all-out footrace. All smiles at the finish. I was glad he

thought we were in competition just as much as I did.

I was pleased to make it in under an hour, and link together a few runs on the brief bit of downwind.

Final results put that into some perspective:

Showing what ocean skis are capable of in the right hands, Tim Jacobs came first averaging over 15 kph for the whole race, only 1 kph shy of the top speed my gps recorded on one of my (much more modest) runs. Allowing for a slightly slower pace in the flat/headwinds section out to Bradley's Head, Tim and the lead pack must have been really flying along in the bumps.

Adam made a fantastic effort in his first major paddle in bumpy water on the ski. And Russell enjoyed the action in his sea kayak.

Full results, along with some photos of the early stages and the finish, are online at www.bridgetobeach.com.au



Gordon, Adam and Russell relaxing at Manly after the Bridge to Beach

Gordon

THANK YOU TO OUR

😊 VOLUNTEERS 😊

I want to send a special thank you message to all those BGCC members who donated their time and expertise to make our recent marathon races such a success.

The whole weekend seemed to sneak up on many of the organising committee – partly because the date of the race was brought forward (thankfully) by a month.

But with less time than we thought was available, we managed to get it all done on time, with the myriad of official forms duly filled, filed and signed by John Harmer and Bob Collins; our sandy beach re-appeared thanks to Bob, TAMS, Paul Hartlipp and various Rakes; the course cleared of stray snags and marked out by John Preston, Alan Clark, Danny Galbraith, Barry Marshall, Lee Rice and a small army of others.

All that was needed was some decent weather and a good turnout of paddlers to enter the competitions. On Saturday the good turn out of paddlers duly arrived and after the fog cleared, the weather was fine, calm and sunny – until 11 a.m. when the races started. The wind-speed shot up from about 5 km/hr to about 17 km/hr, with sudden gusts to add spice to the paddling conditions. With various capsizes, Shane Lund and Jason Rantall were kept busy, fishing people from the water, while Darryl Coventry had a calmer time of it at the upstream end of the course. Thanks to James Suthern and Shane Lund for the use of their tinnies. Also Craig Kentwell for use of his tent and Scott Hunter for the Wetspot tent.

Meanwhile, back at the barbecue, the other small army of workers carried on their cutting and slicing, cooking and assembling of hot lunches and hot and cold drinks. My thanks to

Rae and Adrian Sharp, Karen Balderson, Roslyn Hickson, Robyn Robertson, Danielle Winslow, David Hall, Jennie and Amy Nicholson, Chris Roland, Paul O'Neill, Kerry Bell, Phil Smith, Vanessa Palmer and perhaps others who were not on my list. All your hard work was quite profitable for the club. But a little earlier in the week, Gordon Burns had spent a couple of evenings slicing and dicing the kilos of onions, ready to be delivered on Saturday morning – and not a tear was shed: Thank you Gordon!



Also to be mentioned were Patricia Ashton, who helped at the Entries Tent before the race, John Harmer who got the paddlers started and my daughter Margery who assisted both days, keeping records of the times of all those who went past the start/finish line – much appreciated.

Sunday turned out to be cool and drizzly so entry numbers were very similar to 2010. Breakfast eggs & bacon was cooked by a visitor, Max Lyons, and I was assisted at various times at the entry table by passing paddlers and particularly by another visitor, Monica Boerma, who also helped Scott MacWilliam with the barbecue, morning teas and other snacks.

With the Saturday tinny drivers out of action or paddling, we were in dire need – and I am very thankful of James Harmer, who stepped

into the boat and spent a cold couple of hours out on the lake, making sure our paddlers were okay.

Overall, at least 30 (and perhaps there were 40 or more) club members who turned out to help in many different ways to make our Marathon Weekend such a success. And, thanks to your donation of time and effort, the club made a profit of about \$1,869 for the weekend of entries, spit roast and food stall.

☺ THANK YOU ☺

Helen

MOTHER'S DAY MAYHEM!

On a bright, sunny Mother's Day morning, five actual mother and offspring plus one adopted mother daughter combo plus another ring-in combo, set off for a pleasant 3.5 (at least) km paddle:



The adopted daughter combo had a bit of an advantage over the next placed boat – they knew the actual paddling course, plus they are regular time-trialists. So we had two winning boats on the fastest over the course category: Robin and Roslyn in the red K2, but closely followed (literally) by Sue and Angus in Sharkbait TK2. Sue and Angus were the fastest mother-offspring combo, but would have benefited from an actual briefing as to the course to paddle. Well done to both teams!



Next over the line were Trish and Mickayla in the Mirage 730, in a very respectable 27 minutes – particularly as this was Trish's first ever paddle. They were followed by Russell and Evelyn, who didn't actually fit the 20yr gap requirement but were none-the-less handicapped by Evelyn's inexperience with steering a kayak, so that all corners of the river were explored while Russell powered the boat from the rear.



A very commendable 5th were Jay Crawford with Abby, a very small daughter positioned on her lap in their LMR1.5 Well done to 2 young ladies with the right paddling spirit. Then 6th over the line were Rae and Vanessa Palmer in TK2, while Jess Flint chaperoned Mum Janet in combined OS1 & MR1 for 7th place.



But whatever the placing, all paddlers, family and general hangers-on were welcome to the Après Paddle Party with cake and bickies, tea and coffee.



While all were enjoying their morning tea, Mr. President presented Certificates of Achievement plus a small prize to all who took part in our annual paddling event run especially for our mothers.



Thanks to Adrian for setting up the table & chairs, Ceara for time-keeping and Mickayla and friends for making the teas and coffees.

Helen



Women Paddlers Group

Last month BGCC and Wetspot hosted the Women Paddlers Group information evening when we looked at winter paddling gear, watched DVD's on technique and chatted about what our personal (paddling) goals were and what we needed to do to get there. 18 women attended and it was a very pleasant evening.



From there we decided that we needed to hold some pool sessions to gain confidence and experience in getting in and out, falling out both without and with spray decks, rescues, a variety of strokes and maybe learn to roll. To that end we hired part of Tuggeranong pool on Thursday evening and

Sue ran an activities based session for 11 female paddlers.



It was interesting to see that many fears were put to rest very quickly – the boats weren't too tippy, we could all get in and out without too much difficulty and falling in wasn't the scary thing many had imagined. Getting back into the boat caused some giggles but was achievable. Sue has made up an Activities card which gives participants an extensive list of skills to work on over the next few months.

Our next session will be next Thursday 19th May then every 2nd Thursday till end June. If you are female, a BGCC member and interested in coming along, contact Patricia, numbers are strictly limited.

These sessions are not coaching sessions and participants will be expected to collect their own gear (from the Canoe Polo storage area) and work in pairs to assist each other to work through the activities which were demonstrated this week. It's about taking responsibility, sharing skills and helping each other out.

Thanks to Sue for organising it all.



BGCC Recreational Paddle April 2011 – Shallow Crossing to Nelligen

We had 13 starters for our paddle from Shallow Crossing. Most were treating it as a day trip but 3 of us were camping at Nelligen and making a weekend of it. As we needed to do a bit of a car shuffle we had to have some organisation, and some of us needed to collect boats or people from the shed early on Sat morning. So, times were allocated to meet at the shed, or Braidwood Bakery or the Shallow Crossing turnoff and the Crossing itself.



All went beautifully to plan. At Braidwood there were 6 cars parked on the main street with boats on board as we pulled in for a casual breakfast. We picked up another at the turnoff and meet the last of our crew at the Crossing and were on the water by 10.05am. Excellent! It was a bit of an adventure just getting there with water quite deep over an earlier crossing and the roads being a mess from flooding.

The weather was fine – warmish but not hot, and we started out very enthusiastically with positive thoughts on

what a lovely day it was, the water was calm and the reflections were clear. However the breeze



and at times became a wind! Always a head wind and often forcing us to seek some shelter on either side of the river. Luckily there were few speed boats around so we had the river pretty much to ourselves.



As breakfast seemed quite a long time ago we stopped after about an hour to have our morning tea. Beaches were a little hard to find as the river was still quite high. (We had arranged it so we were starting out close to a high tide to avoid any portages in the shallow waters near the Crossing). Closer to lunch we had far more choice and found a lovely long sandy beach to stop and picnic on. It was very pleasant sitting in the sun having a stretch and chatting away. However, as we had to meet both David's family and Warren's wife Judy, at Nelligen at 3pm we couldn't



stop quite as long as we wished over lunch but had to plough on through the rough waters. The worst thing about this paddle is the fact that you turn a corner and you can see Nelligen but its still 3 – 4kms away and it takes a long time to get there, and doesn't seem to get closer for a long time and today was into quite a fierce wind! But we all made it and everyone enjoyed the paddle and were keen to organise another. (Preferably without so much wind!).

Thanks to David and his wife, Tisha and his 7 seater van, as well as Judy, we were able to get our drivers back up to Shallow Crossing to collect our cars without having too much re-organising and car shuffling. Karen, Jennie and myself stayed in Nelligen and had a very pleasant camp. Spent part of Sunday checking out Moruya



and the Tomago Rivers for another trip.

Patricia

Birthday Dinner

BGCC is Turning 21! - Former and Current Members and their families are invited to come along to our Birthday Dinner.

Date: Friday 24th June

Where: Hellenic Club Woden

Time: 6.30pm

Cost: \$40 pp - Payment by June 20th - details are on the club web site



Winter has arrived early. Make sure you're comfortable through the cold months with pogies, booties and a variety of thermal, neoprene or dry wear for tops and bottoms.

Wetspot also has a range of warm weather gear for those leaving the Canberra winter, so whether you're surfing in the Maldives, enjoying the tropics or just having a family holiday on the North Coast, we stock rash tops, reef shoes, snorkeling gear as well as body boards, surfboards and bags to suit, throughout the year.

Paddlers serving paddlers at 13/68 Wollongong Street, Fyshwick.