



Newsletter of the Burley Griffin Canoe Club
Volume 22 Issue 2 November 2011

Your Committee:

President: Bob Collins

president@bgcc.org.au

Vice President: Alan Clark

vicepresident@bgcc.org.au

Secretary: Patricia Ashton

secretary@bgcc.org.au

Membership Secretary: Helen Tongway

membership@bgcc.org.au

Treasurer: Scott Hunter

treasurer@bgcc.org.au

Editor: Russell Lutton

editor@bgcc.org.au

Public Officer: Russell Murphy

boatcaptain@bgcc.org.au

Burley Griffin Canoe Club Inc.

PO Box 341

Jamison Centre ACT 2614

www.bgcc.org.au

*Well done to all BGCC paddlers and land crew who participated in the
2011 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic*

SPORT & RECREATION ACT

The ACT Government assists the BGCC through Sport and Recreation ACT



President's report

Well, the good weather is doing its best to arrive and we are starting to see more activity on the river – at the 12th October time trial we had 35 paddlers on the water!

Our annual audit has now been finalised and we remain in a healthy financial position, which is just as well, as one of our major sources of income, TriathlonACT, has advised that due to the probability of more blue/green algae in the lake this season, they will be using pools for some of the triathlon swim legs. This year our first involvement in triathlons is not until mid-December. More details will be out in mid-November.

On the accommodation front, it looks as though we may get some good news soon. A while ago we heard that TAMS were planning to build a new toilet block at Molonglo Reach, the old one to be gutted and possibly used as a BBQ shelter. We quickly put forward a proposal that the toilet block be gutted and turned over to our Club and while we have yet to receive formal advice, I understand our lobbying has been successful.

It seems that the new toilet block is scheduled for completion by June 2012, so we are currently putting together a draft floor plan for the additional area. In addition to more boat racking, hopefully we will be able to build a new kitchen, additional shower, conference meeting area and perhaps a spot for some basic gym equipment.

In this issue of *Blazing Paddles* you will see a number of articles about our Club's participation in the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic. This year there were 530 paddlers in 359 boats in the Classic with a record number of 22 paddlers and 11 volunteer land crew from our Club going up to the race. As with last year, the



Club-sponsored volunteer land crew arrangements went off perfectly – as a paddler in the Classic, I know it took a lot of pressure off me during the race, just knowing these great people were on hand at every checkpoint.

If you are thinking of doing the Classic, take note of the paddlers' articles; I am sure there are some handy tips that will help you complete one of the true adventures on the paddling calendar.

See you on the water!

Bob Collins

From the editors' desk ...

November's *Blazing Paddles* newsletter has developed into a Hawkesbury Classic mega-edition. And rightly so! Twenty-two BGCC paddlers participated in the 111 km event achieving outstanding individual and club results—from John Harmer, the only paddler to complete all 35 Classics (over 3,700km), to our first-time paddlers who competed with distinction.

The approach we have taken to publishing the race report is to present an overall summary—contributed by Alan Clark, who led the BGCC land crew—and individual reports from participants.

When trying to extract an individual report from one modest participant, I was asked why anyone would find his race experiences interesting. They are more than just a good read; collectively, they are an invaluable handbook of dos and don'ts for anyone planning to do this event in the future.

Of course, the No 1 thing to do when competing in a marathon event like this is to have a great land crew. BGCC paddlers this year had a land crew extraordinaire! They can't be called the unsung heroes of the event in light of the justifiable kudos heaped on them by the grateful BGCC competitors. But just to encapsulate what they have

said, the level of advance preparation, coordination and planning that went into supporting our BGCC paddlers was simply outstanding.

So in addition to the paddlers' thanks, our collective club thanks and congratulations too are extended to the BGCC land crew—Alan and Trish Clark, Roslyn Hickson, Randall Fitzsimon, Geoff Molloy, Tony Mee, Louise Merrington, Kylie Williams, David Carney and Scott MacWilliam—and to the other family and friends who supported our paddlers. Well done all!

Russell Lutton and Carolyn Williams

~~~~~  
**Boat Captain's report**

Just a couple of reminders for Club members:

- Please remember to use the sign-in book every time you go to the shed.
- If you want to take a boat away call or email me beforehand
- If you think you might like a boat for the Murray, let me know sooner, rather than later.

*Russell Murphy*

~~~~~  
Canoe polo report

The Canberra Invitation Canoe Polo competition was held on the weekend of 29-30 October at the Phillip pool. One team of Canberra players comprised a mixture from absolute beginners (including my two daughters who each played their first competitive game of canoe polo) to the very experienced hands (paddles?) of Sue and Angus Robb.

The games were a great deal of fun (if very exhausting, according to Sulenna). The team played three games on the Saturday and another two on the Sunday. Although they scored a number of goals, and Angus blocked countless shots from the opposition, they did not win many of their games (ok, to be honest, they didn't win any).

I cheered from the sideline – and regretted having decided not to play (even when it was raining – so what, it's canoe polo, you're going to get wet anyway). Next time I'll be in there with them!

My thanks go to Sue Robb for organising the team and giving my girls an opportunity to try something most people have never even heard of.

The Canberra Times ran a nice feature on the comp on Monday 31 October (which can be seen at <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/sport/canoeing/ball-and-all-battle-in-a-pool-near-you/2340936.aspx>).

Jennie Nicholson

~~~~~  
**Flatwater convenor's report**

*Owing to the mega-Hawkesbury issue and the publication deadline, John Preston's report on the final M9 series race at Wagga Wagga and the wrap up for the season will appear in the next edition.*

~~~~~  
Sprint convenor's report

No report was available at the time of publication.

Slalom/white water convenor's report

No report was available at the time of publication.

Paddler profile

This month's featured paddler is BGCC canoe-polo player Roland Mangos. It is timely that Roland fills the spot this month due to his selection for the Australian Canoe Polo Team for the 2011 Oceania Championships being held in New Zealand this December. Well done, Roland, and we look forward to reporting on how the competition goes in a future edition of Blazing Paddles.

How long have you been paddling and who or what got you involved in canoe polo?

I started paddling a blow up dinghy down the Cotter River with my cousins in the 70's. I built a KW7 in year 10 at Melrose High School in the late 70's then four mates and I who also built kayaks camped out at Pine Island for the weekend and paddled on the river. My first involvement with a canoe club was a 'come and try' day at Casuarina Sands sometime in the 80's. Then paddled white water with Nick Kalma and John Wilde during the 80's. Started playing canoe polo in the kidney shaped pool at Erindale with some goals left behind by the Smarties canoe polo team. I played in the early days with Nick Boylan, a pommy who introduced me to the game, Nick Kalma, James harmer and my wife Julie. We redeveloped Canberra Canoe Polo with the help of Nick Boylan, James Harmer, Brett Houghton, and more.



Roland gets into some serious training assisted by his daughters

Most paddlers are unfamiliar with the "boat specifics" of canoe polo craft. What are these and what are you currently paddling?

The polo boat is short, about three metres, has padded ends for tackling other players, and has to be strong to take a 90 degree hit. My first polo boat, about 1985, was a Wuka which had belonged to Kai Swoboda. In the 1990's I built a Wuka Plus. In 1992 a Stingray. In 1996 for the World Canoe Polo Championships I paddled a Vampire built by Kayaks Plus for the Australian Veterans team. Today I am paddling a Vampire S 2008 made from carbon Kevlar which weighs about 8.5kg.

I also own two wave skis, two water skis, a I3 Piranha white water boat, a Prion Fly white water boat, and a Perception Pirouette white water boat. I also still have my 1996, 1999, and 2001 model canoe polo boats.

What are the training specifics for your sport?

In the 1990's a lot of the training was around slalom gates with the addition of dribbling the canoe polo ball, 3 days a week. In the 90's, 4 to 5 days a week for 2 to 3 hours, with 4 hours on the weekend, with boat manoeuvre drills and ball skills. Also travelled to Sydney regularly to train with Sydney teams and the Veterans and open squad teams at Parramatta. Nowadays we train under the Dairy Flat bridge once a week, play at Tuggeranong pool on Wednesdays and train again on the weekends.

Training specific to canoe polo involves ball skills, blocking passes skills, defensive and attacking boat skills, goal shooting skills, ball passing skills, and goal keeping skills.

What type/size paddle do you use?

I used to use a Streamline asymmetrical carbon Kevlar paddle. Now I have a Bracsa asymmetrical which is the strongest and lightest paddle I've owned. It is 2055mm long which I need to play goalie, and block the balls.

Who is your paddling inspiration?

Not who but what! I just love water and any excuse to be in it. Rivers, oceans, beaches. Different size and shape boats. Any type of water, white water, surf, or a quiet paddle on Burrill Lake in the moonlight on New Years Eve.

I've heard the saying "The man with the most toys wins!" I love the challenge in almost all water disciplines including water skiing and snow skiing. I'll be in it.

What is the current focus of your paddling?

To train hard and then play well at the 2011 Oceania games in New Zealand in December. And hopefully bring home a gold medal. Otherwise to just enjoy paddling playing canoe polo, white water paddling, wave skiing on the surf.

What are your paddling goals?

To paddle as much as I can, whenever I can. To try and keep up with the young guns and new techniques in the sport. Try and keep up with new designs in boats and keep the Canberra team competing at a top level. I'd like to see the Canberra team be a team to reckon with. And see a new generation come up through canoe polo. And to promote paddling generally as a great thing to do in life.

Roland Mangos

~~~~~

## youthyak

*Our first contributor to this new section is from Ben Rake – thanks very much, Ben, for taking the time to do this.*



*How long have you been paddling and who or what got you involved in paddling?*

I've only been paddling since the start of this year just after the Murray Marathon. I'd have to say that I watched how much fun Peter, Shane, Dad and Darryl were having doing the Murray Marathon so I just decided to have a go and loved it.

*What boats have you paddled and what are you currently paddling?*

I am currently paddling a K1. I like paddling because you get to be outside, meet new people and have fun ☺.

*What are your paddling goals (eg, PBs, competition, tours, having a good time, etc)?*

I don't really have any paddling goals I just want to keep on paddling.

*What boat would you like to paddle?*

My dream boat would have to be a Nelo Vanquish 2.

*How do you think BGCC could improve its junior paddling?*

I don't really know how bgcc could improve its junior paddling.

*How long will it take you to catch your dad?*

I don't now how long it will take to catch Dad, because if I get close to catching him he'll up his training and pull away

*Ben Rake*

~~~~~

New boats on the river *This month it is the Clark's wooden Struer K2*



What is your new boat and what made you decide to acquire it?

The latest craft to the Clark fleet is a Struer Fanfare K2.

As a junior marathon paddler in Victoria I always admired the paddlers that owned fast, flash kayaks, especially the wooden ones. I paddled an old fibreglass TK1 and could never beat the guys in the wooden ones so I assumed that they must be faster boats. The boats always gleamed in the light and they were lightweight. Of course the paddlers themselves were far better than I was, and they were in K1s.

I had kept the dream to own a wooden kayak and even thought of building one. If only I had the time and patience.

I had been keeping an eye out on the web through geartrade and EBay when this kayak came up. I spoke with Trish and the family and decided to bid for it. One of the problems was the fact that it was listed as a new K2 design and not a lot of information on it. Even through emails to the seller I could not ascertain what age it was

or what model. The photos looked good so we bid and won it.

Can you tell us a little about the history of the boat and Struer kayaks?

It has markings from the Australian Sports Commission, so I believe that it is one of the old AIS boats. I contacted Struer and they cannot supply much information about the Fanfare. They offered that it was built between 1989 and 1993 so it could have been one of the boats that the Australian Team used in the 1992 Olympics.

Struer is synonymous with flat water racing. Struer Kayak is the oldest company in the sector. They make the finest handcrafted wood veneer racing kayaks in Denmark. They have been making kayaks since the 1940s. Prior to the advent of Kevlar and carbon, wood was the preferred choice for Olympic standards.

The company was founded by two cabinetmakers Sv. Helge Kobberup and Gerhard Sørensen in 1947, and two attractive and unique kayaks from Struer were already crossing the finishing line in 1948 at the Olympic Games in London – the first with gold to Karen Hoff from Randers and the second with silver to Frederik Kobberup from Struer was the trail-blazing result.

The racing kayaks are still the centre of the trade. The attractive shape, the functionality and the design – a Stradivarius of kayaks in wood.

Struer Kayak now also offer touring and sea kayaks in fibreglass and fibreglass/carbon fibre. The touring kayak Arrow, the sea kayak Shanty and the sea racer Shark are all developed and built in the same uncompromising quality, and with the same sense of detail.

The world's elite in kayaking have gained various medals at both Olympic Games and other international competitions in kayaks from Struer.

- Olympic Games wins are:
- 1948 Frederik Kobberup (DEN) Silver
 - 1948 Karen Hoff (DEN) Gold
 - 1952 Gert Fredriksson (SWE) Gold
 - 1956 Gert Fredriksson (SWE) Gold
 - 1960 Erik Hansen (DEN) Gold
 - 1964 Rolf Peterson (SWE) Gold
 - 1968 Mihály Hesz (HUN) Gold
 - 1972 Aleksandr Sjaparenko (USR) Gold
 - 1984 Alan Thompson (NZL) Gold
 - 1992 Clint Robinson (AUS) Gold
 - 1996 Knut Holmann (NOR) Gold
 - 1996 Antonio Rossi (ITA) Gold



How have you assimilated to the new boat and are you enjoying paddling it?

The new kayak has fitted in well with the fleet. Mikki and I have paddled it a few times and have found it very enjoyable. It is the old diamond design but feels more stable than the club racing kayaks and tracks well. It has good second degree stability and will be paddled more frequently. I cannot wait to do a Murray Marathon in it.



Yes. It is just a lovely kayak to paddle.

I stripped off the old bits of black cloth tape from the sides of the kayak and found paddle scuff marks. Since then I have sanded and varnished with two-pack polyurethane over the marks and some other marks on the hull that I found. After polishing, the kayak has come up well, and looks beautiful. I will cover the paddle scuff areas with helicopter tape or something similar to protect it.

I would like to try one of the new wooden K1s to see how it fares with the latest kayaks coming from China. I am not that competitive but like to paddle nice boats.

Who would you recommend this boat to and why?

This is not a boat for everyone. If you can paddle a racing kayak and you want to look good rather than win races, then this is the boat for you.

If you can't paddle it, then hang it in your man cave, for everyone to admire.

Alan (Nobby) Clark

~~~~~

**BGCC DRAFT HAWKESBURY RESULTS**

| <b>Class</b>             | <b>Competitor</b>                    | <b>Elapsed time</b> | <b>Handicap time</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Ladies Veteran 50+ Lrec2 | 249 Patricia Ashton/Helen Tongway    | 12:39:00            | 10:33:00             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 238 Scott Hunter                     | 10:27:33            | 11:30:56             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 191 Gordon Burns                     | 12:59:41            | 14:18:26             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 229 Tom Hick                         | 13:00:39            | 14:19:30             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 213 Rachele Irving                   | 13:25:29            | 14:46:50             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 308 Mike Rowland                     | 13:25:29            |                      |
| Ocean racing ski         | 312 Geoff Collett                    | 13:55:09            | 15:19:30             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 117 Marty Holden                     | 13:42:01            | 15:05:02             |
| Ocean racing ski         | 380 Greg Keen                        | 13:42:01            |                      |
| Open - C2                | 448 Steve Harmer<br>John Harmer      | 12:20:25            | 12:29:18             |
| Mens Veteran 40+ LREC    | 165 Richard Fox                      | DNF                 |                      |
| Mens Veteran 60+ LREC    | 318 Robert Collins                   | 12:47:30            | 12:04:31             |
| Ladies Veteran 50+ MREC  | 166 Robin Robertson                  | 16:48:18            | 13:33:42             |
| Mens Veteran 50+ UN1     | 178 Paul Hartlipp                    | 13:57:53            | 14:27:13             |
| Mens Veteran 40+ UN2     | 234 Craig Kentwell<br>Adam Scott     | 10:12:31            | 11:25:24             |
| Mens Veteran 40+ LREC2   | 275 Phil Smith<br>Bernie Fitzpatrick | 14:45:55            | 14:14:18             |
| BorB                     | 373 Paul O'Neill                     | 11:47:04            |                      |
|                          | David Abela                          | 14:02:12            |                      |



## Hawkesbury Canoe Classic 2011

Last years HCC was a great success with a great BGCC landcrew coordination it was time to start planning for this year's event.

This started early and Darryl commenced the planning. Get-togethers were held at Wetspot for the uninitiated and the veterans. A lot of information was passed out and everything was on plan for a BGCC contingent to head up north to compete.



Darryl was leading the push until he realised that his partner was due to have their latest edition around the same time as the HCC. Nobby took over the landcrew coordination and assisted all in their preparations.



Preparations complete it was now time to head north with a trailer full of skis and kayaks. Richard Fox had reserved a position for the Wetspot tent and once at Windsor we set about erecting it. Scrutineering was conducted and a lunch of fresh chicken, assorted cold meats, salad and rolls was enjoyed by and all. Then a quick briefing and more relaxing by the paddlers prior to the start.

The paddlers left Windsor between 4 and 6pm so the landcrew and supporters gave them a hand in getting their craft to the water. The Cattai co-ord (Randall) and Sackville landcrew (Louise and Roslyn) departed so that they were available for the paddlers when and if required.

All paddlers got away well and headed further north but down river. The temperature and conditions were warm and mild and this was to remain throughout the night. No sign of rain this year. Paddlers kept going past Cattai and then onto Sackville where the majority had their first stop.

Richard who had taken off in a flurry and looked great passing Cattai came to a halt at Sackville. He had over-hydrated throughout the day, draining valuable electrolytes on his many trips to the toilet and came down with severe cramping. Unfortunately, his race was over.

Other BGCC paddlers stopped at Sackville and were assisted by our lovely landcrew there. In hindsight we should have had at least three people there as the girls were run off their feet. Most of our paddlers arrived around the same time and being only 31.2kms into the race the paddlers weren't spread out yet. (Lou and Roslyn should give a run-down on the support that they provided).

Those of us that assisted at the start headed off to Wisemans Ferry where Tony Mee and Kylie Williams had set up the Cordelta marquee near the boat ramp and had everything under control. When we arrived there were not many cars but this was to change later. We had a scrumptious feed from the café and then waited for



the first of the paddlers to arrive. We had a good contingent of landcrew at Wisemans as this was our busiest port of call. Tony, Kylie, Geoff Molloy, David Carney, Trish, Scott MacWilliam, Randall and I were all able to provide assistance to our paddlers.

One by one they arrived, were pulled into the ramp and assisted from their craft. Unfortunately some did not have their balance and with the slippery surface beneath the water ended up having a swim when exiting their craft. Fortunately the weather and water was a lot warmer than what we Canberrans are used to.

Everything seemed to go like clockwork at this checkpoint. I guess many hands make light work and for some we pushed them to get back on the water. Others took their time and attended the first aid tent for their fingers, backs, shoulders, arms, legs and anything else that hurt. Food and fluid was all most needed so once recharged they were off

again for the final leg into Mooney Mooney.

Geoff and David headed off to man the Spencer checkpoint but I don't think that they were required. However, it pays to have someone attend this checkpoint just in case.

Trish, Scott, Randall and I headed off to the finish to set up the Wetspot marquee and prepare for our BGCC paddlers. During the setup John and Steve Harmer came in but were missed by us. They had their own support crew and as they had accommodation not far away they picked up their canoe and left to enjoy a hot shower and sleep.

Scotty, Craig and Adam were our next paddlers to arrive. Then our matriarchs, Patricia and Helen in their 730 and the remainder came in throughout the morning. The rest of the landcrew arrived and assisted the paddlers from their craft. Some needed more help than others but all were in good spirits. Breakfast was provided of cereal, bacon, eggs, juice and hot drinks but I think most wanted to just get changed and relax.

There were 22 BGCC paddlers this year and they can all provide different accounts of their night of ordeal either in Blazing Paddlers or verbally down at the club. Some made use of the physio tent and some had their hands checked by the first aid but nothing extreme.

Our final member to arrive at the finish was our grand lady in her little yellow sea kayak, Robyn. Although she may be a little slower than most she seems to go on and on. She and Bob seem to be able to paddler forever.

Once our last paddler was home and provided with some support it was time to pack up the BBQ, marquee and all of our craft and head back to Canberra. It really seemed a long drive and after driving for a few hours it was time to hand the wheel over to Trish. Her Kia Carnival is a great car to drive but we forgot how much fuel it uses when towing nine boats on a big trailer along with a car full of people. Trish had to slow down to almost 60km/h on passing Collector. We scraped into Eagle Hawks Nest with fumes in the tank.

All wanted to go home and rest so the trailer was left full at my place and was sorted at the Wednesday evening time trial. Overall, a great time was had by all, Landcrew and Paddlers. Yours in paddling,

*Alan (Nobby) Clark*



## John Harmer

This Hawkesbury saw a couple of milestones for Steve and me. Firstly it was my 35th Hawkesbury. I paddled the first Hawkesbury in 1977 and have not missed one since. I also became the only paddler to complete all 35 Hawkesburys. Steve has now paddled the race 24 times.

This one was our slowest Hawkesbury in all our 24 years of paddling together. That was possibly due to the less than favourable tides or maybe it could have been because of the lack of adequate training.

## David Abela

*You know it's going to be "hard" but until you've experienced it first hand you can't imagine what "hard" feels like. Everyone that tackles the HCC does it hard, it doesn't matter if you do it in 9 hrs or 17 hrs, it's equally hard for everyone. For me, the issues that really tested my ability to complete the HCC were niggling clothing issues - life jacket a bit too tight - cutting like a hacksaw blade into my neck and gloves which I've worn for over a year which I thought were "blisterproof" gave me blisters, overheating - stopped at Wiseman's to take off my spray skirt - ah!....much better!, headache and slight nausea - I was quite surprised to find that my 5 minute stop at Wisemans seemed to cure this (!) - and I couldn't get the last 20k's of the course up and going on my GPS - very frustrating, as the first 80k's of the course helped me a great deal in finding my way through the dark.*

*As a rookie in this event I had an endless list of concerns leading up to the starting siren, but they were all put to rest with the excellent lead up meetings, training sessions and advice from the BGCC organisers and members. I'm sure I couldn't have completed it without the fantastic support of the paddlers, landcrew and volunteers associated with our club. The thing that really kept me going when I was struggling with the fatigue and exhaustion through the night was that it was going to be worth it to cross that finish line and share the experience with my paddling comrades at the BGCC. Oh....and to John Harmer - who's completed 34 (that's thirty four) additional HCC's than I have - I say.... "I tip my hat off to you mate....you're a bloody legend!!"*

## Adam Scott



As my usual Hawkesbury partner was unavailable for the race, I asked Craig Kentwell if he would be interested in racing in a double.

I thought that he would be steering, but he had a preference for being in the back seat, so I decided to do my first Hawkesbury steering, much to my usual paddle partner's delight.

After a number of 20 km training paddles, many of them on back-to-back days, I had no reservations about doing the race with Craig, I knew we were going to finish, just the time was up in the air.

Our start was a little bit chaotic with a number of K4s in the mix, but we managed to keep our heads and not go too hard too early.

The best thing about the race: Craig's navigation, running with the tide, finding Scotty near the end (that pepped us up too), our shore crew Simone and Steven with a lightning pit stop, and the BGCC shore crew. Very well done!

The worst bits: 2 times against the tide and weed.

Our time was a bit slower than we wanted, but that just gives us a bit more motivation for next year.

And steering for the first time? A very different race than being in the back, but I think I like it (except for nearly hitting a moored boat).

---

## Scott Hunter

My Hawkesbury.

As usual my preparation as for anything in my life was as little as possible as late as possible. With barely 20 km a week on the water for two months before the race, I felt I was going into what sounded like an extremely tough race, well under done. After last year's horror stories and predictions of long stints into oncoming tides, I was a little nervous but hey, what the hell, let's do it.

I got to the start line with very little fuss, thanks to Randall for the drive up and the awesome BGCC support crew. Getting onto the river in the second last start for the day, I found myself sitting next to none other than Simon Stenhouse. I could only assume he sought me out for a good wash ride to get him to the bridge quicker. Before I knew it we were off and the thoughts of paddling with Tom, Rachelle and Kiwi slipped straight out the back of my head as I headed towards the bridge at a reasonable pace but not really hammering it. I looked around to find myself in about 5th position only a few boat lengths behind Stenhouse, and unbelievably that's where I stayed for the rest of the race (just the distance between myself and Simon changed).



I managed to spend over 60 km sharing wash rides with a bloke called Nathan from Gerringong and we chatted and puffed our way into the night. After Wiseman's I spent the next 20-odd km alone until I found Helen and Patricia at the Low Tide Pit Stop. This joint is mud to your knees and would have beauty salons around the world jealous of its' heeling properties. I had to be helped from my boat to be able to get rid of too many gels and litres of water or my bladder would have popped.

The last 15 or so km I nearly lost it in many ways. Lost my direction and lost my mind. I started seeing other paddlers when there was no one there. After wandering directionless for around 5 km I decided to slow down and find someone with a GPS. I had no idea where I was going in the absolute darkness and fog patches. Luckily Craig and Adam pulled up behind and let me tag along for the last few k's that seemed to go on forever.

We finished together after the paddle up the final straight and I did a time of 10hrs 27min, well under my dream of cracking 11hrs. I was stoked.

The most amazing part of the race for me was the nature in the dark. Fish jumping all around and hitting the boat. Driving my paddle hard into a stroke only to have it not go more than two inches into the water as it hit

huge jelly fish. And the luminescent water, creating firework-like bubbles off the end of my paddle is something I will never forget.

There was a touch of luck in the way my race went, lucky to paddle with Nathan and Craig and Adam, lucky I lazily left my weed rudder on when I meant to change to my big rudder, lucky my bum didn't pack it in like it did on the Murray last time and lucky to have such a great and well organised land crew.

But one thing that wasn't luck was every paddle stroke. I did them and did them all by myself. They hurt a lot towards then end but I still did them and I am stoked that I did. There is a funny little thing your brain does after all that hurt. It just says in a little voice down the back "Do you reckon you could do it faster if you trained?" Maybe; we will see.

A big thanks to all.

Scotty

---

## Gordon Burns

Before tackling this Hawkesbury, I'd never done a long endurance event in any sport. So for me the highlight was finishing. I'd had no idea what was going to happen to me after 6 hours of paddling. Turns out, not much: I just kept paddling.



I was glad to have the chance to paddle with my brother, who came out from LA for the race. I was also glad to have the chance to motor home through the last section on the wash of Brendan O'Sullivan (finishing for the 25th time).

It was hard work keeping up with Greg: I stripped a fair bit of bark off my (by then quite fragile) palms in the process! As it got harder and harder to hang on, I thought often of resting and waiting for an OC6 I could hear chanting just behind us ("... hut ... hut ..."). But I hung on and Greg and I ended up putting half an hour on them.

My thanks to Alan and the landcrew team for a very well run operation. I was greeted at the finish and swiftly furnished with a reviving hot chocolate and egg and bacon sandwich.

There weren't really any lows as such. I guess towing half an aquarium's worth of weed early on wasn't so fun though.

The best thing I did in preparation were the 40 km+ training paddles. I did two. If I did it again, I'd do one very early on in my training, and do one of them as a 60 km.

The second best thing I did was to get Dave Abela's GPS track and use it to navigate. It was great. Thanks Dave. I highly recommend using a GPS track - there was never any uncertainty where to next!

Another technique I perfected only towards the end of the race was to speed up and slow down the craft you're wash-riding:

If they're going just a tad too fast, the secret is to get them chatting. Everyone slows.

To speed someone up, offer unsolicited tips on navigation or similar. Guaranteed to irk anyone into a higher pace!

---

## Richard Fox

And a word from the one who didn't finish.

To all the paddlers, congratulations on your personal successes. It is no small undertaking to finish the event - I feel qualified to say so! To the land crew, the club's success is your success. It was impressive to say the least the sense of support that was evident on the day.

Personally I'm shattered to be honest. I trained long and hard for this event and was keen to do well, given my absence in 2012. I did my own thing with regards land crew support - not to disrespect the club, but because I wanted to share the excitement of the event with Anna and Jane from go to woe (well, Sackville). This said, I would like to personally thank Louise who checked on me in the first aid tent and communicated my demise up the line.

And for those who want to learn from my mistake, I believe I over-hydrated at Windsor through the day. In my regular toilet trips I peed out essential salts needed for healthy muscle function and didn't replace them until too late. My heart rate monitor kept going off telling me I was over 85% of maximum HR - and that was before Windsor bridge was out of sight. It stayed high and never came down. I had an average HR of 160 by Sackville. But it was the cramping of major muscle groups that did me in. The paramedics couldn't stop the cramping for an hour by which time I was resigned to pulling out.

My apologies to the club for being the one that spoils a 100% finish rate. It takes nothing away, however, from the achievements of individuals and the club.

## Rachelle Irving

### **My secret for turning titanium to tears in under two hours .....**

So in a near-perfect lead up to my very first Hawkesbury, I was feeling great and couldn't wait to get in the boat and start the biggest sporting challenge I had ever undertaken. I was a little nervous earlier in the day, but the excitement and anticipation was definitely able to push that aside. Given that it was my first go at the Hawkesbury, my goal was to finish, and nothing would have prevented me from achieving that goal. I started out strong and steady although was feeling a little frustrated with the amount of weed that I was accumulating. Never mind, I figured the weed factor wouldn't last long, I just had to endure it for now. Well, by the time I reached Sackville I had stopped at least half a dozen times and come to the realisation that the 'weed'



situation was not going to abate any time soon. Never mind, I was feeling strong as an ox so this was just character building, and preparing me for the journey ahead.

I paddled on and although feeling more frustrated with having to stop to de-weed at least every km, by the time I reached Wiseman's I was convinced that no-one else felt as good as me right now. I jumped back in the boat reflecting on the many stories I had heard about how awful people felt by the time they reached Wiseman's. Not me though, with a fresh set of clothes and a tummy full of Pringles and supplements, I had pretty well convinced myself I was made of Titanium (no really, I had)! Apart from some queasiness, I was feeling absolutely fantastic and I was going to power my way past many, many boats for the remaining 40 odd kilometres. So off I went, passing boats left right and centre, geez how slow they all were, I was just getting stronger and stronger ..... or so I thought! I got to about the 75 km mark and started feeling just a little bit weary, as in I need to lie down and have eight hours sleep kind of weary. I started playing a little game of 'I'll just close my eyes for 10 strokes' which then became a much better game of 'I'll just close my eyes for 20 strokes'. After about 10 minutes I realised that the only place this game was headed was me have an early morning dip!



So I decided to pull over to the bank and have a quick power nap. A few minutes later I awoke to find that all those boats I had passed were now steadily cruising past me. By now I had about 20 km to go and I was feeling very ordinary. I reached the low tide pit-stop and decided there was no way I can stop because I wouldn't have the mental toughness to

get back in the boat. Instead, I decided to tough it out without a break – all I could think was if I don't stop for ten minutes, I get to stop that much sooner at the end.

By the time there was 15 km to go, Kiwi had caught up to me and we start working off each other and jumping on as many wash rides as we could. This goes well for about 5 km until I pretty well hit the wall (I swear, there was one right in the middle of the river) and start crying like a baby, a really tired, really hungry baby. But what I noticed next is that as the tears started to fall, my speed picked up. So here I was paddling (if you can call it that), sobbing to myself and just trying to get there. Unluckily for Kiwi he was born with the 'don't abandon a damsel in distress' gene so he had to just suck it up and endure the additional pain of floating along next to me and not finishing much earlier than he otherwise could have.

Just as I thought I was never going to reach the finish, Kiwi thankfully reassured me that it was just around the next corner. It was just the boost I needed! Unfortunately after psyching myself up to get around that corner and then finally reaching it, he muttered something along the lines of "whoops, wrong corner". Luckily there was nowhere to get out of the boat at this point as I'm

pretty sure I would have done so. So on we trudged, for what seemed like an eternity until we reached the blessed sight of THAT bridge. I would like to say that I felt relief and a flood of pride and realisation about the feat of my accomplishment – but no, instead I started to cry again, made many rash statements about NEVER doing it again and proceeded to sell my previously much-loved Epic to Nobby for the princely sum of \$20. To be honest, it took a good two days for that feeling of accomplishment to kick in, which was followed shortly after by a strange wave of dissatisfaction at my performance leading to me committing to do doing it all again next year as well as the Murray in a couple of months. So what did I learn? I am in fact not made of titanium, I can cry like a baby, no matter how bad something is, just shut up about it because I'm probably going to forget about it within a few days and look forward to doing it all over again!

---

## Paul Hartlipp

This was my second attempt at the Hawkesbury Classic. While I hoped for a better time, I am thrilled I finished. I also had more fun and experienced less pain than I expected. While one finish doesn't make a paddler an expert I do have a suggestion, if you have a hankering to do the race and some time to prepare, don't be scared. Give it a shot.

Just paddle the race one stroke at a time. Over and over and over.

We started our weekend in the apartment next to Marty and friends. We had a dinner in the local Brooklyn pub. We returned here after the race to collapse and sleep. We were within five k's of the finish line on the waterfront. The bridge was clearly visible to us and it was beautiful and very peaceful.

In the morning we got up and drove to the starting line in Windsor. In reality the race starts just after you arrive at the starting line. The starting line is in a field and can get either very hot or cold depending on the weather. While one is working through the scrutineering process one must remain well hydrated and well fed. In addition a fair amount of time is spent lying around in an attempt to rest. I had a six o'clock starting time which meant I had to wait through all the starts. I hated waiting because I wanted to be on the river in my boat, not watching others paddle. I felt like a caged animal.

While waiting I chatted with the starter. Some fun facts. Half the people who enter the race in a given year will try once and will never be heard from again by race organizers. The Murray race sent a contingent to examine the racing population at this race. Both races are looking at removing the "TK" classes. John Harmer's longevity "competition" got sick and was told by his doctor not to paddle. The starter was chatty and provided a well-needed break at the starting line.

John Harmer gave the best advice for that start, while any paddlers like to present an impressively fast start one probably should recall that the real time is made up later in the race. The 6 o'clock start included six person side-riggers that don't follow a super straight line but leave behind a sizable wash. So until Cattai I surfed one of these wakes while I tried to settle down for a long night. This allowed me to maximize speed while minimizing effort. At this time I heard noises that we were breaking 10 K an hour while I surfed. Later in the night the surfing would be more difficult. As it got darker I started to dip into my food supplies. At Cattai I heard Randall cheering (thanks Randall I actually heard you and it made a difference). When he saw me I was just dealing with my first weed crisis and had lost the out-rigger wash. I was wondering how I would ever finish the race.



In my first race I didn't pay enough attention to food and drink. After Sackville I had a headache. This time I made sure to stop every hour or so and eat and drink. Bob "swears by" "Gu", and I thought he was a "Gu" crackpot. I am a convert. In a balance boat opening the package can be a pain, but is worth the effort. This time my blood sugars remained high, and I drank three litres by Wiseman's. I felt much better. I also had bananas waiting for me at Wiseman's all this food helped me immensely. It is not enough to be in shape for one of these races, one must also be constantly eating and drinking.



Then came Sackville, I stopped here and went to the bathroom. A note to racers, someone gave me the hint that it is best if you don't sit down at any of the stops and if you're feeling okay its' good advice. If you get out of your boat take the opportunity to walk around a little. If you sit down you might not get back up. The Sackville land crew of Roslyn and Lou were very efficient and helpful.

From Sackville to Wiseman's was pretty comfortable going. I was in a groove and paddled into the night. Most of the important corners on the river are marked by checkpoints to assist in navigation. At times one runs into bars with loud Saturday night crowds partying along the river. These are NOT checkpoints and offer some confusion along with bar patrons shining light as us paddlers for "fun".

Most of the paddlers don't see the "fun" in the shining lights.

---

## Craig Kentwell

From my point of view....

It was with some trepidation that I entered in a double with Adam Scott for 2011. The idea of having to be in synch with someone else for 10 odd hours was a bit daunting. The reality was however the opposite. After about a dozen two-hour paddles on the lake, Adam and I seemed to be working well together and were able to maintain a comfortable speed on our regular excursions to the dam and back. So come Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> we were pretty confident we'd be able to keep in time for the required duration.



The race itself went pretty much to plan, however I underestimated the effect of the incoming tides (note we had to contend with two of them) and also the lift that we'd get from the outgoing tide that we enjoyed in the middle of the race. Weed early in the race was also a bit of a problem and required a few stops to back up and clear the growing forest trailing off our stern. In the end we finished a bit slower than planned, but pretty happy with how it had all panned out.

It was great to see so many other BGCC paddlers on the river, though I must admit we must have missed quite a few in the darkness. The calls of encouragement from BGCC land crew at each rest stop also lifted spirits enormously.

Despite his black stealth ski, we spotted Scott with about 10 km to go and we were able to team up with him for the final slog against the tide. It was great to have another club member alongside to share that wonderful first view of the Brooklyn Bridge (only another 3 km to go – and they must be the longest 3 km in the world!).

Thanks to Nobby et al who did such a wonderful job throughout the race. The supportive BGCC land crew were much envied by other paddlers from less fortunate clubs!

---

## Robin Robertson

The second time was easier, but I am glad I had finished once in a double already. And I was really glad to see that bridge, even though it seemed to take forever to get there. It was hard work, but I had a good time. I really appreciate the efforts of Alan, Trish and the land crew. They were great. All I had to do was paddle and navigate. And I didn't get lost and run into a bush, like Russell and I did before. Also it was great having people chat as they passed.

I remember Tom was convinced that "most of BGCC is ahead of me", but he was one of the early ones that passed me and he finished quite well. I think my biggest problem was my hands, which had circulation problems the last 20 km, probably due to the taping being too tight. More paddling and better calluses on my fingers was needed; So, more training next time. And hopefully I will be faster. That would be nice.



---

## Helen Tongway

Highlights: We finished. We finished in a good time. We were third in our class, at 12h 39 min., a long way behind first, but not far behind second. The weather was good – warm and calm. We both paddled well – no busted bits. All the gear worked as it should. David Abela's route-map on the GPS worked very well. And, most importantly – the land-crew was second to none! Available, helpful, skilled at their jobs. Thank you to all 😊



Lowlights: The tide, heading in the wrong direction, twice. The fog to confuse the navigators. The unsighted blobs in the water (jellyfish). The nausea. The hour it seemed to take to paddle from where we were when we first sighted the bridge and finish, till when we actually got there. And more nausea. Not realizing till long after the race that my GPS was set on "moving time" instead of "elapsed time", giving a somewhat greater time for the race than I was expecting from the instrument.

---

## Patricia Ashton

Back for a second go at the Hawkesbury.

This was the 4<sup>th</sup> attempt for Helen and myself to paddle the Hawkesbury. We both thought it wise to stay away from ladders, children with colds etc – we forgot knives. Still, the Doctor gave me a tetanus shot and a course of antibiotics and the 1<sup>st</sup> Aiders at Windsor were generous with the bandaging – so what could go wrong?!

I think we were both fairly confident that we'd get through in a reasonable time, we were paddling well together and had done several long distance training paddles. Maybe we should christen the boat "Chuck and Chunder" – we both had a history of being sick during long distance paddles.

Not to worry, what could go wrong? In the end nothing really did. My hand was bandaged again at Wisemans but mainly for a couple of blisters (first open blisters ever suffered during paddling!), the 'wound' was fine. We had a couple of pee stops, a very memorable one at the Low Tide Pitt Stop - knee deep in mud to get to the 'toilet' which was a hole with a couple of planks on either side behind a hessian curtain – but welcome for all that! Served with scone and tea, well worth the stop.

We both were unwell by now, Helen succumbed, but only stopped for about 15 paddle strokes at a time before she was back into it. From the back it wasn't as bad as it could have been – as 'it' hit the water the phosphorescence bounced back and it was actually quite picturesque, all sparkly. I was able to hold off with some heavy breathing and inane conversation.

We spent most of the race alone, although we did have a couple of people wash ride us at various times, which was great for our confidence, especially as they didn't pass us, but we eventually lost them. About 10 km out we paddled with a group in single Mirages, just to take our mind off 'things', but soon got back into our rhythm and left them behind.

Luckily the GPS was working, so finding our way through the fog wasn't too difficult. We did have to stop once to read our instructions just to double check, but mostly Helen



ploughed on confidently – only once did we almost come to grief when an anchored boat suddenly appeared right next to us, about to hit us! And twice we were caught on mudflats requiring some bouncing and digging to get off.

We felt we paddled well, although we did say 'Why are we doing this?', and I do distinctly remember also saying 'Never again'; we came in strong (ish), though no sprint to the finish. We recovered reasonably quickly, and while at first we were a bit disappointed with our time (the GPS said 11.50hrs which was faster than our anticipated time) the 'real' time of 12.39hrs was still within the 13hrs we thought was acceptable.

Bob and I are now talking about a faster double for next year .....still don't quite know why though!!

Thanks to all the land crew – you really did make a difference. Giving verbal support, walking me to the toilet block saved us valuable minutes, delivering tea and pulling us out at the end, with big smiles and lots of praise, as well as food, drinks, tents, BBQ's etc

---

## Mike Rowland

My third start in the Hawkesbury and determined to avoid the trees that leap out of nowhere at you, my first priority was to finish this year, second being to beat my previous finish time. So all through the dark I hugged the middle of the river; a cunning plan but a killer from Wisemans against the tide but it did mean I achieved my first goal. The second was always going to happen if I stayed on the boat as my training partner would have reminded me, every paddle, every day for the next 12 months if I did otherwise.

Most rewarding moment was realising that I had the jump on said training partner by about 15 minutes when I pulled in at Wisemans and feeling strong, thinking 'this is going to be a good race'. Of course the Hawkesbury has a way of biting back and she caught me and passed me by the time I had peeled myself away from the Pit-stop, a very impressive performance by Rach as I swear I only stopped for a few minutes.



So a finish and nearly an hour quicker was a great result for me – and if I knock the same off each year, look out Simon in about 5 years; and even better was the fantastic and unflagging moral-boosting support of the land crew and which without, would make the race a tougher prospect than it already is.

---

## Bob Collins

I have done the Classic once before - in 2008 in a double with Helen Tongway, but I was told quite firmly by my training partner, Patricia, that to tick it off my 'Bucket list' I had to do it in a single.



So, right through winter, I dutifully paddled the extra K's to make sure I was ready by Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

After hearing the horror stories about the storm that blew in last year, I was a bit apprehensive, however this year the weather was great. My start was at 5:00 p.m. and I was aiming to break 13hrs which meant a 6:00 a.m. finish.

When the gun went off at 5:00 p.m., I did what we all tell ourselves we are not going to do - I went too hard for the first couple of hours. Luckily, I managed to rein myself in and settled into a steady pace from then onwards.

Prior to the race I had loaded the shortest river course into my GPS and was having an easy time following the little arrow on the screen. I knew if I could do this for the entire race it would cut the distance by about 10Kms, however after about 25K's my GPS died (I think it drank some saltwater!) and I was left to manually navigate my way. Not good!

Most of the time you are able to track faster boats as they go past but at 2 crucial turning points I found myself alone and took the wrong turn both times.

I can blame the heavy fog that rolled in for finding myself at the Spencer Pit-stop but have no excuse for the second wrong turn. Luckily for me, 2 other boats had made the same mistake and between us we were able to muddle our way back on course. However my planned 13 hours was not looking good.

Luckily when the fog lifted it became easier and I ended up doing it in 12hrs 47mins - I was very happy with that time.

---

## Geoff Collett

*What a long dark paddle and thank god for GPS navigation!*

*I thought that I was prepared, but it seemed that by Sackville that a stomach upset going to make me withdraw early. Thanks to encouragement and a warm drink from Louise I was on my way and felt fine for the rest of the trip. Some idiots with torches throwing rocks and abuse after Sackville gave me a bit a wakeup, as did a ski paddler who cramped up, fell out and surrendered after Wisemans around the 77km mark. If not for the GPS, I just wouldn't have known where to go in the dark with no moon, stars obscured by cloud and then fog. Before I finished, improvements for next*

year came to mind including a weed (or no) rudder, fast drying cycle gloves, less unneeded weight in the boat, using a paddle strap, putting all the checkpoints into the GPS (because they aren't always easy to find) The iPhone worked great as a GPS (app was Motion-X-GPS) and I would use that again. I hit a lot of sticks, weed, fish and jelly fish with my paddle and nearly hit 2 huge steel posts due to zero visibility. I fell in just after CP-D while reversing to remove weed and crushed 3 fingers between the paddle and the boat getting back in (3 black nails), which seems to be my only injury. I was really pleased to finish despite the poor time – plenty of room for improvement ☺

*This is one event where I just wouldn't have entered without the great support of the land crew. It was a great thing to feel confident that there would be someone there to help at the major checkpoints and to keep track if I was to go missing at some point. Thanks again to all concerned and thanks for transporting my boat and moving my car from start to finish.*

---

## Tom Hick

I came to the 2011 Hawkesbury late in the picture when I'd just finished the Sunday morning time trial on the 28<sup>th</sup> August in a disastrous time of 75:50. I'd only arrived back in Canberra at 3 p.m. the day before from 8 months away with little paddling and precious little of that was over more than about a kilometre up the river to a play wave. I had just put my boat away when Bob asked if I'd like to do the Hawkesbury again this year. Having been support crew last year as one of the last things I could do for the club before I departed, I thought that's what he meant. Unfortunately, because word had got around about how much I'd enjoyed being support crew rather than paddling last year, all the support crew jobs were already spoken for and I had to paddle if I wanted to be included.

So there was I with about 8 weeks to go and an inadequate amount of training. Bob sensing my lack of enthusiasm for attempting what is by any measure a difficult task sweetened the offer by telling me it was all organised and I could travel there and back with him in the chauffeured Presidential limo. I was on the hook and wriggling just wasn't going to get me out of it.

On the big day I did travel both there and back in the limo while plans for the new 2 story Clubhouse with administration areas (code for bar, sundeck and executive washrooms etc) were discussed. It seems that some people have plans to grow our little Club and leading 22 ACT paddlers into the heartland of NSW paddling to compete in one of their toughest races was no accident.

Like most people, I went out too fast at the start and paid for it towards the end. It was my 3rd time at the Hawkesbury and I should have known better but, I jumped onto the wash and was the last of a bunch of about 9 including our own Rachelle, Kiwi and Geoff all of whom were paddling skis like me and I was too dumb to admit they were in better shape than I was. Anyway the bunch stayed pretty tight for the first hour and then Kiwi went left pacing us about 50 metres away in clean water. I don't know if he cooked it up with Rachelle or not but soon after she put in a sprint to take the lead of our bunch and he swung in alongside her. The bunch fell apart. I lost track of Geoff then and was essentially on my own watching Kiwi and Rachelle disappearing into the distance. I didn't want to stop at Sackville but made a minimal one to adjust my seating and GPS. When I got into Wisemans I discovered I had somehow passed them in the dark.

I was in the tent at Wisemans comfortably sipping a Coffee when Rachelle & Kiwi turned up. Not wanting to be beaten by a girl or a Kiwi I scoffed my Coffee, leapt in my boat and bolted for the finish. Again, I should have known better. A bit more rest and a more relaxed pace out of Wisemans would have been to my benefit. By the time I got to the Low Tide Pit Stop I was real sore and having difficulty balancing. For some reason, I kept thinking I was about to go in and



every 5th stroke or so was a brace costing me energy and speed as I dropped to about 5 KPH. Luckily the bridge got closer and once I saw the finish line I put my cap back on so as to be properly dressed for the photo. I put the cap on cos I had been hot the whole way and the only effective thing I could do to cool down was take my cap off.



Many thanks to the BGCC support crew. There are a few but I'm not one that can do something like that without help. Without the help of the BGCC support crew I would not have done my 3rd Hawkesbury. The certain knowledge that there was someone friendly and helpful at the finish to look after me was the only thing that got me past the Low Tide Pit Stop and Spencer. Well that and the hope that Kiwi and Rachelle hadn't somehow passed me in the dark.

I'll happily do it again with only 1/2 the level of support that was so wonderful but not without a bit more time in the boat and training in the months leading up to it. Companies wanting to save money on executive airfares should make all their people paddle at least one Hawkesbury because after doing it even once in a ski even long haul economy flights to the US would be luxurious.

Based on what I now know that I didn't 4 years ago, I've got some advice for those who haven't done it but think they might like to. In no particular order:

- Don't;
- 
- Paddle lots with correct/good technique;
- 
- Participate in Club activities particularly the Time trials;
- 
- Get help - coaching etc. Ask questions; people are sometimes in a hurry but no one in the club is unfriendly or unwilling to help. There are some real experienced athletes in the Club who are happy to share their knowledge;
- 
- Look for opportunities. Weekends away are an excellent opportunity to practice and spend time with experienced paddlers who can help. Blazing Paddles is an excellent source of information on what has already happened but don't rely on it or someone telling you to find out what is going to happen. Stay for the BBQ after time trials, check the Club website and forums occasionally to see what's going to happen and don't be afraid to ask if you can be in an activity.
- 

## LAND CREW REPORTS

### Scott MacWilliam

This was the first time I had observed a major marathon race, the first time I had seen the Hawkesbury River and the first time I had met many of the BGCC members. It was also the first time for many, many years that I have gone about 36 hours without much sleep. And it was a wonderful experience!

The BGCC organisation was superb and the land crew worked as one. Not an angry or even disparaging word, which mattered a lot to someone of my inexperience.

The emphasis upon finishing regardless of the personal pain or the elapsed time was contagious, and to see how many BGCC members stayed to welcome all the club's paddlers up that final stretch of water was inspirational.

Thanks for the chance to be part of such a memorable event, when even the weather gods did their bit.

---

## Geoff Molloy

Should I mention getting lost at Wiseman's Ferry by getting on the wrong Ferry at 0230hrs on the Sunday morning via not reading the Land Crew driving directions? Then driving in heavy fog with limited visibility ability and realising I'm no where near Spencer.

Then back tracking and finally getting to Spencer at around 0530hrs and finding my other Land Crew. I'm pretty good at Electronics Communications but need to brush-up on the Navigation department for the 2012 race.

Maybe the club should consider running Navigation courses? Reading the handy guide, they recommend driving the course length in daylight so that the Land Crew get to know the area.

The winding narrow roads from Wiseman's to Spencer and then Spencer to the Mooney Mooney are not good to drive at that time of the morning to night.

I also found driving alone without somebody assisting me to navigate made it very difficult.

---



## Photo of the month



Our club's friendly mum-possum, out scavenging for food at the HCC de-brief barbecue. Photo: Helen Tongway

---

## Victorian Marathon Championships 2011 Race report

The 2011 Victorian Marathon Championships were held on the Barwon River, Geelong, on the weekend of 8-9 October. As if paddler numbers aren't spread thinly enough already, these dates clashed with the 2011 Australian Masters Games in Adelaide. One pleasing result was that junior competitors at the Geelong regatta almost outnumbered the masters.

The weather for and organization of the regatta were excellent, with the course format following the familiar 5 km loop format that we are now familiar with in NSW Marathon 9 events.

Michael Leverett (1:52:57) took out the men's open K1 event and Angela Harris (2:26:52) the women's open K1. BGCC featured in the results through Russell Lutton's first place finish (1:09) in the men's K1 V60 event.

### Boat Blog-the monthly goss from the river on who's doing wot

The big news for this month's blog is Roland Mangos's selection for the Australian Canoe Polo Team for the 2011 Oceania Championships being held in New Zealand this December. All BGCC paddlers wish you well, Roland, and hope you have a rewarding competition.

Popular and competitive BGCC paddler, Richard Fox has hung up his Time Traveller kayak for (at least) 12 months. Richard and family fly out of Australia on 18 December for Halifax, Nova Scotia. Richard's wife has accepted a 12-month teaching exchange, with Richard initially becoming a home dad for their 6 and 9-year-old sons. Richard lists his immediate priorities as settling the boys into school and learning to keep house! Finding "work" in time is his second priority. Richard hopes that he can get into kayaking over there (there are some well established clubs nearby) and he is already planning what next after the Traveller – a K1 perhaps! We wish Richard and family all the best and look forward to their safe return in January 2013.

Seen paddling on the river over recent weeks with the ski brigade is Troy Wuttke from South Australia. Troy, who is working in Canberra for a couple of months, hopes to train at the river on Wednesday and Friday mornings. He is the surf ski captain at Glenelg Surf Life Saving Club and he has been paddling ocean skis for six years now. He is also a keen adventure racer, triathlete and tennis player. Make Troy feel welcome if you see him on the river (if you can catch him!).

Presently leading the 2011 *Guinness World Records* category “How many kayaks can fit into a garage” are the Luttons, (it’s really only Russell) who recently added another K1 to their flotilla.

Question: when push comes to shove (or biff to bash), which will break first on impact; a carbon Epic paddle blade or a carbon Epic rudder shaft? At Wednesday’s time trial on 2 November, this was put to the test when in close racing Andrew Parkinson’s Epic carbon paddle came into contact with the Epic carbon rudder shaft of Scott Hunter and Pete Garbutt’s beautiful Epic K2. Unfortunately, it was the K2’s rudder that came off second best—and came off. It’s now resting in the Molonglo silt. And it wasn’t even a good afternoon for a swim!

**As the only point of gossip is to spread it, let us know what you know at  
editor@bgcc.org.au**

~~~~~

Happenings in the region and beyond

7 November—monthly BGCC club meeting, club shed

12 November—the inaugural Tuross Lake Paddling Classic (Note: BAK timed fitness paddle for this date has moved to Tuross)

See <http://www.turosshead.org/KayakClassic/TurossPaddleClassic.htm> for details.

12 November: Ocean Series race, Narrabeen downwind, from Pittwater, out around Palm Beach and down to Long Reef.

19 November-Burley Griffin 24 hour challenge

Go to: <http://bgcc24hourchallenge2011.gofundraise.com.au>

26 November-Ocean Series race, King of the Harbour, from Long Reef down around north head and into the harbour side of Manly.

17 December: Ocean Series race, the 26km 'Twenty Beaches', from Palm Beach to Freshwater.

~~~~~

## For sale

*If you have any boats or items of kayaking equipment for sale, provide details to the Blazing Paddlers editors.*



Q Craft SLSA spec ski. This is an older ski designed and made in Sydney. Always been kept inside and had long periods of no use; so overall is in good condition. Would best suit a paddler around 5ft 8 to 6ft 3, give or take a bit. Happy to chat to anyone interested in more detail regarding condition. Ski located in Canberra but can get it down to Bateman's Bay-Sydney. Price \$870 neg. Call Andrew, 0401 353 920.

TK1 by Horizon Kayaks, in excellent condition, carbon layup, recently fitted with new rudder and footplate set up; fast but stable hull. Kayak located in Canberra, \$1,300, Call Russell, 0401 005 274.



3 Months use! Immaculate condition  
 Be on the water for your next race.  
 Contact Damo 0411 383 337; \$3500 ono. Will deliver from Northern Beaches to Ulladulla, but have contacts in Canberra and the Bay.  
 Double sit-on top kayaks, Mission Surge, \$750 (new value approximately \$1,1350). Includes two paddles and two PFDs. Contact Anthony, 0410 614608  
 Single sit-on top kayak, Mission Flow, \$650 (new value approximately \$900) Includes paddle and PFD. Contact Anthony, 0410 614 608

Omnious kayak from the renowned Elliott Kayak range. Carbon/kevlar construction, 11.5 kg making it light, responsive, fast yet stable. Kayak is in good condition. Price \$1900 ono. Contact Roy Willis, Batemans Bay, Phone 0408 428 843



Horizon Flyer. Well looked after boat which is in very good condition which has good stability and a good turn of speed. This particular boat has some notable race achievements and has served me well. But it is now time for it to be passed onto someone else to enjoy and race, as it is now, just gathering dust. Price \$1,900. Contact Roy Willis, Batemans Bay, Phone 0408 428 843

condition. Contact Gordon 0402 145 672  
[gordon\\_b\\_burns@yahoo.com](mailto:gordon_b_burns@yahoo.com)

Think Legend, \$2100 ono. Kevlar 12.5kg. Fast & stable. Good



~~~~~  
 ~~~~~