



*Newsletter of the*  
**BURLEY GRIFFIN CANOE CLUB**

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



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## Coming Events:

- *Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Marathon Race 5 - Teralba*
- *Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May, Harbour Race 2 – Dolls Point*
- *20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May, Paddle Australia Sprint National Championships - Adelaide*
- *Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, Marathon Race 6 – Lane Cove*
- *Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May, Harbour Race 3 – Brisbane Waters*
- *10<sup>th</sup> June, Harbour Race 4 – Hacking Classic*
- *13<sup>th</sup> June, Marathon Race 7 - Penrith*

## President's report: Bob Collins

As you may have noticed, we no longer have any buoys along our stretch of the river.

The recent flooding in the river took many of our buoys into East Basin and then, during the general clean-up along the river from the 'Rock' to the Hospice, TCCS removed the rest of our buoys. We have now retrieved the buoys and will be placing them back along our time trial course in the next couple of weeks. Unfortunately we now need to submit a fresh application to TCCS for permission to relocate them – the permits people in the NCA, however, are happy to let us replace them without seeking new approvals.

Our main pontoon survived, thanks to Shane and Scott having done a lot of work securing it a couple of weeks prior to the flood. They will repair the minor damage as soon as possible.

We are still looking at quotes for the replacement of this pontoon and plan to make it the subject of a Capital Assistance Grant application in August.

In this issue you will see photos of the [Batemans Bay Challenge](#). A total of 78 boats entered and all found the conditions quite tricky in spots. Prior to going under the bridge there were large swells making it very uncomfortable for everyone at the start, then further up the river there were jellyfish everywhere. It certainly put you off your stroke every time you hit a jellyfish but made everyone determined not to fall in!

You may also have noticed that there are not as many European wasps around our beach at the moment. TCCS found and destroyed 5 nests in our area, a couple near the main pontoon and one next to our portage pontoon.

Take note of the article in this issue about an experience with wasps by a couple of Canberra paddlers. See you on the water.

*Bob*

Ed note: The NCA released over 80,000 ML of water at Scrivenor Dam during the flood which is almost 2½ times the volume in the lake! They removed almost 60T of material (15T more than in August last year), much of which has been chipped for reuse or taken to green waste facility.

## Safety Officer Report - Surviving the Canberra Winter.

Mid-winter in Canberra is a lot colder than most Australians think. Based on the events of the last few weeks, it looks like we are in for a doozy this year (like Europe and North America have just experienced). Traditionally, July is the coldest month with mean maximum temperatures of 11.4 °C and minimums are around -0.1 °C (Bureau of Meteorology All Years Average (1941-present) at Airport). At 9 am our mean temperature is around 3.9 °C and at 3 pm it is 10.5 °C. When we factor wind speed into the equation, the wind chill<sup>1</sup> (or apparent temperature) is much lower, with values of -1.4 °C at 9 am and 3.6 °C at 3 pm. When we look at 2019's daily data for Canberra, the range in wind chill at 9 am was -5.6-5.4 °C with an average of 0 °C (last year we had a warm winter). The equivalent data for 3 pm was -3.1-9.8 °C with an average of 4.4 °C. It is possible to paddle through winter but we need to dress properly and take a few important steps to ensure our safety if things go pear-shaped.

Our biggest risk is falling out in winter. If someone falls in, the apparent temperature is substantially lower than in air, and we lose heat to water about 25 times faster than we lose heat to air. In July, water temperatures in the river are usually around 4-5 °C. At these water temperatures, an average person will become seriously hypothermic within 15-20 minutes of swimming. Thinking about our river and the length of time it takes to get your boat to the edge and to get out, this becomes an issue!

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<sup>1</sup> Wind chill is the lowering of the body temperature due to air flow over the body when the air is colder than body temperature. There is no universal standard for calculating wind chill because of the role played by human perception in thermal response, but it is possible to estimate the amount of heat lost by a body submersed in a fluid of colder temperature to within reasonable limits. The Australian model uses a concept called apparent temperature (AT) which was developed by a nice piece of work done by Steadman in the mid 1990s where  $AT = \text{air temperature} + (0.33 \times \text{water vapour pressure}) - (0.7 \times \text{wind speed}) - 4$

Furthermore, the main risks to humans when submersed in cold water are cold shock and cold incapacitation. Cold shock occurs when you suddenly become submersed in cold water and it begins with a gasp reflex followed by uncontrolled hyperventilation. This has happened to me during a Windsor race. The gasp reflex was really scary. You cannot breathe in but you can breath out. It lasted long enough for me to become seriously worried about my life and fortunately for me, someone had stopped and I was hanging onto their boat. They knew the symptoms and they talked me through the horror of not being able to breathe in. This goes away in a minute or so, but I would not have liked to have had that happen to me whilst trying to swim and rescue my boat!

Incapacitation is usually what leads to drowning in cold water. After the shock of falling in, one starts to swim the boat ashore. What happens now is that the warm layer of water surrounding your body (and protecting it from heat loss whilst quiescent) is continuously replaced with cold water as you swim, accelerating the loss of heat from your body. After a few minutes of this, you start to feel very cold and your body shuts down blood flow to your limbs, preserving the heat for your core. Your muscles feel weak and heavy, and you struggle to swim. Those who make to the bank, struggle to clamber up or deal with their boats because their hands won't grip no matter how hard you try. Once out of the water, the peripheral blood vessels will open up and your core will cool quite quickly which is why it is really important to get someone warm straight after getting out of the water. So imagine what happens when one gets back into the boat and continues paddling!

FYI - In 2018, I fell in at the bridges in July at about 9 am. I managed to swim to the old river crossing (took about 5 minutes), empty my boat and finish the session (about an hour) BUT I was wearing 260 Ice Breaker merino thermal top + t-shirt over it + 100 % long sleeve wind proof jacket + wind proof gloves and thermal bottoms and shorts over them. The wind proof jacket and gloves prevented heat loss with the atmosphere and my body temperature warmed me up. Had I not been wearing them, I would have struggled to paddle home (about 8 minutes max from bridge to pontoon). A wind proof cag will not be as effective because of the effect of cold incapacitation.

Rules to help make paddling safe during winter.

*Rule #1. Wear a LIFE JACKET.*

*Rule #2. Good thermals top and bottom. (No cotton. Wet cotton garments in cold weather will make you colder – a well-known saying for hikers and skiers is cotton kills!)*

*Rule #3. A pair of wind proof gloves or pogies*

*Rule #4. Good ear warmers or something to stop you from losing heat from your head and ears.*

*Rule #5. Put a 100 % wind proof long-sleeve jacket in your boat that you can put on if you fall out.*

*Useful Equipment: wearing a mask (P2 mask with valve) or similar over your nose will take some of the dry cold off the air that you breathe in. This will help reduce irritation to your upper respiratory tract and prevent those irritating upper respiratory tract infections that we know so well over winter.*

Finally, some common misconceptions about swimming in cold water are:

- **vigorous swimming will help keep my body warm when swimming in cold water.** Swimming in cold water will not keep you warm because heat is lost according to the temperature difference between your skin and the thin layer of water surrounding you (boundary layer BL). When you don't move in water, your skin and the BL are at the same temperature and you lose the least amount of heat. When you are moving, you continuously replace the warm BL water with cold water and your skin temperature goes up (from the higher metabolic rate associated with movement) so that the temperature difference is greater and you lose more heat. Even though you feel warmer because blood rushes to the skin, you lose more heat by swimming. NOTE ... how you feel and what is happening physiologically can be two vastly different things. It is what is happening physiologically that kills, not how you feel.
- **I don't have to worry about hypothermia because I'm athletic and fit** is a very common misconception among athletes. People with low body fat (especially males) have a higher risk of hypothermia. Lean bodies cool faster in the water. Even the strongest swimmers will get hypothermia.
- **if I wear a life jacket, I will be okay.** A life jacket will reduce the rate of heat loss significantly, even if you are swimming and it may reduce the initial cold shock but it won't reduce **cold incapacitation** as your limbs are still exposed to the cold water. Wearing a life jacket does increase your chance of survival if you remain still in the water and wait for rescue as it allows you to float with minimal disturbance of your warm BL.

Unfortunately, wearing a life jacket slows your swimming speed so if you try to self-rescue as most paddlers do, you will be in the water for longer. The life jacket will slow heat loss when you get out of the water as it protects your core from wind chill, but you will still lose heat at the same rate from your limbs. So all up, a life jacket will help in that it has a calming effect but it is not guaranteed to save your life in cold water.

*Margi*

## Coach's Corner: Margi Bohm

During the last couple of months Margi ran club wide technique and injury prevention sessions that were well attended. Thanks to everyone who supported the program and we hope that you all learned something from the experience. We will be putting up some resources on the website following feedback from these sessions.

Margi will be running a training camp at Moruya over the first weekend of July, based from the Ingenia Holiday Caravan Park on the north side of the bridge. The camp will run from Friday to Monday and will involve a variety of sessions based around skills and technique. If you are interested in being part of this weekend, please email Margi as soon as possible as places are filling up (margi.bohm@gmail.com).

Other activities this month include the doubles round at Lane Cove on Sunday 23 May. BGCC is the current trophy holders for the ICF and club points score but we are being ravaged by Lane Cove at the moment. LET'S GET EVEN and put in a big squad at Lane Cove. The course is up a small river and it is a pleasant paddle. Incidentally, you can also paddle singles if you can't find someone to paddle with.

Finally, after an unfortunate removal of the buoys that survived the flooding, we have plans to put the buoys back over the next month or so. There is still a lot of debris in the water so please be careful when out there, especially during poor light. And if the sun is not visible in the sky, PUT A LIGHT ON YOUR BOAT. Technically the light has to have 360 degree visibility, but our greatest risk is being run down from behind so a bright light on the back of your boat is the bare minimum. The water police will stop you if you are on the lake without a light pre-dawn and post-dusk.

*Margi*

## Club news

### Club Boats

The clubs Fleet Renewal Report is due to be updated this year.

We will be putting together a group to work out a plan for our fleet for the next 5 years, if you might be interested in being part of this could you let me know – how long you've been a club member and what sort of paddling are you interested in. It would be good to get someone from canoe polo, a recreational paddler and maybe someone with other paddling interests.

The club currently has a wide range of boats which cover most aspects of kayaking within the club.

**Did you know that all club members have access to our club boats?** (Some of the racing boats may require a coach to show you how to best use them)

**Do you know what kayaks the club does have?** we have a range of K1's from 'stable' masters K1's to high end ones in Med, Large and XL. So for anyone wanting to get into K1's there is a great progression, also several TK's, a bit more stable, but still a 'racing' style boat. We have Epic V7 & V8 ski's and one first generation Epic V10. There are 2 Horizon Flyers, a flatwater racing boat which is quite stable and a great kayak for those looking at doing ultra marathons, there is a Mirage 580 which is also a good choice for someone considering an ultra marathon for the first time. There are also various plastic kayaks which are great for beginners and/or touring as well as our Hobie Quest 13 which could be used to go for a fishing expedition (on the river or lake), or for collecting rubbish? Maybe you'd like to try canoeing? We have doubles and singles. Then there are 5 inflatable SUP's.....

**Lane Cove is coming up, May 23<sup>rd</sup> and it's a doubles event. Get some doubles practice in and book your boat soon.**

We have several K2's, some of which are admittedly rather old; as well as 2 TK2's; there are now 2 Mirage 730's (doubles), a newly purchased light weight one to be used for racing and a double Stellar ski.

While winter isn't really the time to try a new and possibly less stable boat, give some thought to what you'd like to try for next season. Club boats are there for all members wanting to try something new, maybe have a bit more stable kayak for a race with rough conditions, or try out a new discipline, i.e. ocean racing, or giving you access to doubles.

## Buoys

The grey army (and Patricia) were out today in some beautiful autumn weather painting our recovered buoys. All have now been retrieved from either the river, lake, ACT Govt warehouse with the final yellow one being collected this morning from opposite the beach where it had been camouflaged in autumn leaves. Our red buoys needed to be pink, not quite sure if I'd call it pink, however, all are freshly painted, pink, yellow, blue and green. Now comes the hard part – putting them back in the river!

Thanks to Bob, John L, David G, and Barry M.



## Membership Fees

At our last committee meeting we agreed to set BGCC fees back to our pre Covid amounts, i.e. Adults \$80, Juniors \$40, Family \$200 and \$30 New Members fee. Both BGCC and PNSW had decreased fees by 20% for the 2020/21 year because of Covid. However, to cover our regular running costs of the club including, rental, utilities & insurance, divided by 250 members, memberships need to be \$80. Income from boat storage and key hire, will go towards boat, paddle, pfd replacement, a new pontoon, any shed improvements etc.

Members will also need to pay PNSW fees (\$80? Not confirmed) as well as any boat storage or key hire fees. Membership will be due in June, reminders will be sent out. Members who do have boat storage or keys will be required to make payment by August at the latest or potentially lose their rack/key. If you have difficulty in paying please let Patricia know & we can make arrangements.

*Patricia*

## Canoe Polo update

### Canberra summer series

While the sun shone brightly on the first day of the last summer series polo competition in Canberra on 10<sup>th</sup> April, it belied two bitterly cold days which people were heard to mention as the coldest comp days ever. A greater contrast to the 43 degree plus days in Adelaide could not have been found.

Apparent temperatures hovered around 5 most of the time and I seriously worried about a Victorian junior's wellbeing when he fell in and didn't seem in a hurry to get out and some Queenslanders who only seemed to have brought shorts and t-shirts. There were many competitions about who could wear the most thermals and still paddle. Nana Harmer's chicken soup however brought a welcome respite from the cold.

Despite this the competition was fierce with 5 Open teams (1.7 from ACT) and 7 Restricted teams (1.8 from ACT) across 2 fields. It was great to see a range of new players including 2 junior Queensland teams. Some differences in team members between Saturday and Sunday made for interesting competition. In open, the 5<sup>th</sup> ranked team from Saturday made it into the 2v3 playoff on Sunday due to an additional team member while in restricted, the unbeaten team on Saturday lost convincingly in the final to a much lower ranked team on Sunday.

The highlight of the weekend was indeed the Open final which for the first time in living memory (well maybe not – but you get the idea) was an almost all ACT final with the young guns (and a couple of Queensland youth) playing the old timers. I did not calculate the difference in average age, but it would have been substantial. In true Canberra style, several yellow cards were awarded to both sides although interestingly generally for unintentional fouls. Competition was fierce and the scores were equal at full time. Golden goal ensued and while it is debatable whether these should be allowed, the game was won by the old timers following a round arm shot from Deaks.



### Junior training day

Then on Monday, BGCC hosted a junior polo training day with 20 participants from around the country and 8 coaches. There was no messing around with everyone required to be there at 7am and on the water for fitness training at 7:30am with the weather ever so slightly warmer than the weekend. Thanks to Jade and James for coordinating and extra special thanks to local guest speaker Margi for providing some cross discipline coaching on technique and core skills which was greatly appreciated by all juniors and coaches.

### Ongoing weekly training

As you can see from the above, BGCC Canoe Polo is going from strength to strength with large numbers turning up. This has caused some difficulty with our generally casual approach and we have had to add some structure to our Tuesday night trainings, however there are still always opportunities for new people to take part. So if you are interested, come to Tuggeranong pool on Tuesday night at 7:45pm.

*Louise*

## Who's who? Robert Bruce

I have been asked to give a glimpse into some of the earlier years of the oldest club member, Robert Bruce. He was born into a middle-class family where being the eldest and a male he was granted all the privileges of that group at the time. Didn't have to do household chores, women's work wasn't it? Took five minutes of living on his own to shake that reality.

School days were a dreaming time between weekends where he positioned himself in the least noticeable area of the school room and could concentrate on drawing sail-boat designs. He kept his head down and got through all the exams, somehow. Nobody really noticed if he was present or not. It caused a bit of a problem for the teachers when it came to writing the class reports. Their attendance records showed 'present' but they couldn't quite remember him. So, they fell back on "could do better". "Earth to Robert, earth to Robert" was a common phrase his mum would use to call him back to the family reality.

He did realise that there were some benefits to the capitalist society and worked on paper runs and holiday factory work to get enough money to buy his first sailing boat, a cheap VJ. As the rescue boat towed his submerged craft back to shore, he soaked up the lessons of 'Buyer Beware'. The word sieve came to mind.

A few years as a beach bum completed his teenage education before turning back to designing and building moth sailing boats. His slap dash, she'll be right mate attitude was corrected when one of his earlier newly constructed boats had the rudder fall off and he rammed a hole in his best friend's boat. His new attitude to strong construction and engineering in boat building paid off in many championship wins over the following years.

A few years down the track and our drifting optimist now found himself with a wife and shared accommodation with another human who objected to having a moth boat built in the flat. "We can't invite people to visit with a boat being built in the lounge room". Solution, build it in the bedroom.

The next decade was a mind-expanding experience of playing and living with creative people in the film and television world of Gough Whitlam's enlightenment of the ABC. He accepted the gift of a rain check from Gough to a free place in a university at a later date.

By now too many shavings in the bed had led to a separation. A couple of years building a cabin in the mountains before he realised it was time to take up Gough's gift and head for Uni and a Visual Art degree. Here we find the lucky bum enjoys another four years of play time where he gets struck on the bum by another rainbow. It must have been a cold, rainy, Monday night in winter and she had been locked out of her car. Why else would a lovely lady bother to engage in conversation with this vagabond? Thirty-five years later and she still hasn't woken up.

Realising the low value of an emerging traditional artist in society, Robert took on the new creative computer software available and began to build a very small business in architectural visualisation and animation. Another unicorn soon appeared. and he was recruited to build computer created visual data bases for a Canadian flight simulation company. Five years of playing Slartibartfast from Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy creating new coastlines, fiords, mountains and cities was a creative pinnacle.

Meanwhile back on old earth his weekends were spent with hammer, nails and building materials as he proceeded to renovate and rebuild two houses. I have now arrived at the last twenty years where Robert moves to Canberra, buys a hire car and joins a hire car company and of course renovates another house. It is in the last ten years that he discovers kayaks, the BGCC club and marathon racing.

The BGCC club, its members and the good friendships he has made here have been an enjoyable period and hopefully a continuing one. His choice of boat is always a non-sinkable one and so skis are his choice. These have led to two state championships, oldies division, a divisional ten winner in a marathon series and four Hawkesbury marathons with a record time for his age group on one occasion. As he lay exhausted on the grass after he completed his first Hawkesbury a friend quipped "going for five?"

He still hopes to complete the challenge.

Anonymous



## European Wasps – a very real risk!

Be aware, there are European Wasp colonies along the river. Although those around the jetty have been treated, it is still highly likely that there are other colonies and they are known to be all the way along the Molonglo from the water ski area and upstream. As the following experience illustrates, the risk of attack and of serious outcomes is real and should not be taken lightly.

Recently two of our club members, Lindsay and Diane, were paddling upriver at the tail end of the recent floods. More adventurous than some, they decided to head up past 'the rock' behind Fyshwick, venturing on land to get past some small rapids in the river. Here one of the members was attacked by a large swarm of European wasps and sustained over 100 stings. Her life jacket may well have saved her life as protected her core to a certain extent. They managed to get into the water away from the wasps and then back to the boats and luckily had phones with them to call 000. It took an hour for 4WD ambulance to arrive coming across the farmland at the back of Pialligo. Ambulance on the phone kept calling to check for vital signs and potential shock. Recovery has been slow and is likely to take several weeks at least. We all wish Diane the very best recovery and hope to see her back out on the water soon.



If you see a European wasp nest contact the eWasp Hotline on 6258 5551, email [info@ewasp.com.au](mailto:info@ewasp.com.au) or visit the eWasp website <https://ewasp.com.au>

If stung, apply a cold pack to reduce pain and swelling and if there is evidence of a more severe reaction, seek immediate medical attention.



European wasp



European Honey Bee



European wasp nest

## Race report – Marathon series 4, Davistown

It was another glorious day on the sunny coast of Davistown which was Race 4 of the Paddle NSW Marathon Series. The course itself was a 5km loop, dodging the Davistown Ferry and speed boats, including various amounts of weed. The race is not for the faint hearted and is more suited to the stability of an ocean ski with the wind chop making ideal runners if you were game. All credit goes to the four paddlers (Larissa Cleverly, Jack Jessen, Andrew Parkinson and Dominic Hides) to undertake the long commute to Gosford from Canberra to represent their club. Many paddlers agreed just to stay upright was the challenge with many recording times 10min+ usual race averages. The highlights of the day was to see Larissa Cleverly slowly rein in her competitors in Division 3 to place Third. Jack Jessen was equally victorious with a First place in Division 11. Andrew and Dom were not so successful scumming to the murky depths to greet Dave Jones' locker.....once again.

*Dom*

## Batemans Bay Challenge photo gallery



## Updated point score for the Marathon series (after race 4)

Lane cove is currently leading the series point score with BGCC not too far behind in second place.

Club	Points after Race 4 in Davistown	ICF Points after Race 4 in Davistown
Lane Cove	3,391	36
Burley Griffin	2,751	35
Sutherland Shire	1,612	12
Penrith	1,323	11
Windsor	1,161	9
Manly Warringah	1,134	5
Brisbane Waters	941	3
Cronulla Sutherland	578	3
Hunter Valley	537	3
Wagga Bidgee	537	3
Hunter Valley	428	3
Central Coast	315	2
Sydney Uni	179	1
Pacific Dragons	50	1
Newy	49	1
Illawarra	48	1

## Marketplace

### 2016 Epic V12

Very good condition

Stored at the club

Have a long term injury which is going to keep me off the water for some time.

Better off someone else enjoying the speed!

\$1850 negotiable. Grab a great boat for a great price.

Cheers, Leigh Dickie

Mob 0418 686 200



## Heads-up: Sydney Harbour Kayaks doing the end-of-season sale of their hire-fleet.

There are some good specials that some of our newer paddlers may be interested in. For example the Mirage 583 (1, 2 or 3) Freerider Sea Kayak Sale Price: \$2,495.00.

[Details and price list here](#) or check out a video of the kayaks [here](#)

*Thank you to all contributors to this edition of Blazing Paddles.*

*If you have contributions for the next edition, please get in touch [sue\\_702@yahoo.com](mailto:sue_702@yahoo.com)*