



BLAZING PADDLES

Newsletter of the

BURLEYGRIFFIN CANOE CLUB

Volume 34 Issue 1 December 2023

Your Committee:

President: Tom Long

Vice President: Laura Kleinrahm

Secretary: Patricia Ashton

Treasurer: Neil Fargher

Boat Captain: Colin Calderwood

Membership Secretary: Patricia Ashton

Safety Officer: Margi Bohm



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*The ACT Government assists this organisation through the
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Position	Person
Membership Secretary	Patricia Ashton
Public Officer	Bob Collins
Editor ('Blazing Paddles')	Robert Bruce
Coaches rep	Margi Bohm
Webmaster	Geoff Collett
Boat Captain	Colin Calderwood
Canoe Polo	Laura Kleinrahm
Time Trials	Matilda Stevenson
Marathon	Richard Fox
Event Co-ordinator	Bob Collins
Sprint	Marcelo Cabezas
Slalom - WW	Craig Elliott
Social Convener	Maria Ouvrier
Recreational paddling	

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Coming Events:

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Races | <i>SIRC</i> | <i>PNSW Sprint Championships</i> | <i>20th & 21st January 2024</i> |
| • Race | <i>Wagga Wagga</i> | <i>Marathon Series Race 1</i> | <i>3rd February 2024</i> |
| • Race | <i>Albury</i> | <i>Frank Harrison Memorial Races</i> | <i>10th & 11th February 2024</i> |
| • Race | <i>Ulladulla</i> | <i>Makai Cup</i> | <i>10th February 2024</i> |
| • Race | <i>Windsor</i> | <i>Marathon Series Race 2</i> | <i>26th February 2024</i> |
| • Race | <i>Canberra</i> | <i>State Marathon Championships</i> | <i>9th & 10th March 2024</i> |

President's Report

As another year rounds out the club has continued to flourish. Since my last report we have had a wild Christmas party where there was a great night of stories, quizzes and tasty foods and beverages. I must say I personally would recommend going the Australian Croatian Club in O'Connor. The staff there were amazing and looked after us very well.

In terms of the paddling news for this issue of the *Blazing Paddles*, we have had more members compete overseas, members complete the Hawkesbury Classic and plenty of time trial evenings since the last *Blazing Paddles* issue. There has also been more Maria-catered paddling events which are great social events. Also, on a side note, we have been granted some more shoreline by the ACT Government weed contractor when they were approved

to remove all of the reeds between the dock and the Canoe Polo fields. We now just have to foster some nice lawn there so the clearing doesn't become overrun by weeds again.

Going forward into the 2024, I hope that as a club we can continue the community spirit we have fostered over many years; to continue supporting club members to paddle to the best of their abilities. In the New Year I look forward to Paddling with everyone; especially as

the weather warms! Now is the time to try that tipper boat that you have been eyeing off over the colder winter months.

I hope everyone has a great Christmas and New Year.

Tom Long

Late insert: our Vice-President, who managed to graft a gift of money to the club. Well done Laura!



Club News

Presentation Night

A wonderful presentation night was experienced by those attending the event. A few hiccups in the presentation of trophies created a light-hearted atmosphere which was carried over into the trivia phase. All in all, getting through the night without setting off the fire sprinklers could be counted as a success.

The following awards were presented to these worthy participants

Awards

Junior Paddler of the Year – the club has several junior members who have been quietly achieving this year. Nominations were:

Yuvani Chhetri – has been paddling TKs for 2 years and is now progressing to K1s – using her core is helping her tennis. Yuvani took part in the State Champs, paddling along with our beginner adults.

Yuvna Chhetri – comes regularly and while she was paddling a TK, she has found more enjoyment on a SUP and is keen to get going.

Liam Broughton – trains with his dad Aaron and was encouraged to paddle in the State Champs in the junior class. Aaron won his race, and this inspired him to come along to time trials. He is now paddling a junior K1 comfortably and improving his times.

Jess Harmer - Jess was a part of the open women's team who won nationals, as well as the Tasmanian team who came second in U21s. This year Jess was focused on completing year 12, and we look forward to seeing what she achieves in Canoe Polo next year

Winner – Liam Broughton

Liam Broughton and Tom Long



Grand Masters' Grand Master – the club has many active paddlers over 70 years old. This year's nominees were:

Bob Collins —Bob won this last year and trains regularly, races doubles in the Marathon series and is a keen participant in Ultra Marathons – this year completing the Hawkesbury Classic.

John Lockie – hasn't done any racing in a number of years, however, John is passionate about getting people into boats, he and Helen have been looking after our juniors for several years. John also assists in most of our Taste of Paddling courses and takes Saturday 'Paddle for Pleasure' sessions.

John Harmer – John is a founding member of the club and paddled and raced for many years. John is the only paddler to do every Hawkesbury Classic - The last many years he and son Steve have only trained in the weeks before this race, this year, after 3 years off, John and Steve did their training and completed John's 44th Hawkesbury.

Winner – John Lockie

Merit List – Encouragement Awards

Karla Palacek – Karla started paddling in our first Intro to Club Paddling late November 2022. She was pivotal in making that group successful with her enthusiasm and ability to get people engaged. She has thrown herself into white water and is a wonderful ambassador for paddling generally.

Andy Osborne - Andy started paddling about 12 months ago with commitment and enthusiasm; however he has also taken on a variety of Club duties. He is one of our 'extraordinary ordinary committee members'. He has taken on the purchasing drinks and cleaning items for the shed and is helping out with our Taste of Paddling sessions. Always friendly & helpful.....

Neil Faragher – Neil has been paddling with the club for several years, however, he took part in the Intro to Club Paddle course and has been training and working on his technique and speed since. Has attended some of the Marathon races but has also taken on the club Treasurer role and opens up the shed for our beginner paddlers.

Patricia Ashton - for Taste of Paddling and Intro to Club Paddling



And this bunch is the collection of current BGCC Life Members: James Harmer, Margi Bohm, Helen Tongway, John Harmer, Patricia Ashton and Bob Collins. (Note the gender balance! Pure luck.....)

Rainer Swoboda Memorial Award to the **Club Member of the Year**: for exceptional service to the club. Rainer Swoboda was one of our founding members, who was always willing to help out and help organise. This trophy is awarded in his honour.

Nominees:

Laura Kleinrahn – has been reforming canoe polo for several years: coaching, organizing training, building up membership with Come and Try sessions, running training camps, fund raising and more. Now she is our Vice President.

Patricia Ashton – whatever...

Maria Ouvrier – About 2 years ago offered to cater for the Club if we wanted to put on some dinners etc. Since then, Maria has become a legend, both within the club and with Paddle NSW. Her lunches and dinners have seen many club members come together at events and at our AGM. We have seen our social activities bloom as people come for her wonderful menus. She has brought together members from a variety of disciplines – canoe polo, marathon and recreational.

Winner - Maria

The John Harmer Hole-in-the-Paddle – for the club member most in need of a hole in their paddle – to bring them back so the rest of the field will have a chance of winning.

Winner – Adam Hofmeyer

Adam Hofmeyer and John Harmer



Most Improved Male Paddler

Andrew Webber – was recently awarded the PNSW Marathon Series Highest point score. He started last season. New to paddling, selling his plastic sit-on-top, to spending time in club boats before purchasing his *Think Ocean Ski*. He won the 2023 Marathon Series Div 5 aggregate points-score and is now mastering higher end ski's and trying out K1's.

Andy Osborne – Has come from being a non-paddler (though with a background in rowing and long-distance cycling). Has fought his way up from Div 7 to Div 6, moving from his stable V7 to less stable Ocean Skis.

Winner: Andy Osborne

Most Improved Female Paddler

Cathy Gao – Cathy joined canoe polo last year. Since then, she has become one of our regular paddlers, attending two national championships and several interstate summer series. Cathy's ability has quickly progressed in this time, even through an ACL reconstruction, to the point she is now one of the strongest female polo players in the club.

Karla Palacek – New to paddling, took part in some marathon races, trained in her K1 then took up white water, training with various coaches in NSW and Tasmania.

Maria Ouvrier – Also new to paddling, she tried out a few club boats before purchasing her own recreational kayak, and then a ski. She has taken part in various races, including the Frank Harrison. Maria came along to our training camp & trains regularly with an eye to ultra marathon events.

Louise Yabsley – has previously been awarded this for her C1, but this year Louise has taken up the double blade. She has overcome her C1 legacy, (a very one-sided technique), and raced successfully in various kayaking events from States to marathon and sprint.

Winner – Cathy Gao

Male Paddler of the Year

Adam Hofmeyer – coaching and playing in the winning Open Men's Canoe Polo team.

Richard Fox – trains hard for the NSW Marathon series and Ultra marathons. Clocked up countless km in training with the result that he, and his doubles partner, came in 2nd overall in the Hawkesbury this year.

Craig Elliott – the poly-math of paddling: class winner (in K2 with Laura Lee) at Marathon World Champs, many PNSW Marathon Series races; Denmark; Ocean Racing Champs, Perth; Slalom racing and placing...

Winner – Craig Elliott

Laura Lee & Craig Elliott



Female Paddler of the Year

Matilda Stevenson – Increased her speed throughout the season – just missing out on a place in the Australian team by mere seconds.

Laura Kleinrahm – as well as coaching, Laura was a member of the winning Women's Open Team and has been selected in the Australian Canoe Polo side.

Kate Eckardt – has been doing some training in Canberra. Kate recently won gold with Jess Fox.

Winner – Laura Kleinrahm

2023 NSW Marathon Series

In this year's Marathon series, the winners of the 100% Commitment Medals – all having paddled in all 10 races of the series were Lachlan Stokes, **Andrew Webber**, Michael Dellapina, Don Johnstone, James Harrington.

Andrew Webber was the Highest Overall Point Scorer of the Marathon series with 993 points.

White Water State Championship

PNSW Canoe Slalom State Championships 28-29th October 2023, Cotter River, ACT

A very successful 2023 PNSW Canoe Slalom State Championships were held on the Cotter River on the last weekend in October. This event was part of an initiative to rebuild Canoe Slalom participation from the ground up, with the Cotter River venue providing all the elements needed – a grade 1-2 natural river with easy access from the bank and a campground on site (with hot showers). These, along with good weather and a local volunteer chef from Burley Griffin Canoe Club providing meals on site, ensured that the event was sure to be a success. Paddlers came from as far away as Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Hunter Valley - in addition, there was a strong contingent from the Western Sydney Whitewater Club including many paddlers for whom this was their first race.

Our well-known Vintage Paddlers, Kevin Songberg (River Canoe Club) and Gary Nelson (Illawarra Canoe Club) were joined by quite a few other senior members of our paddling community, with a particularly strong showing from the local Burley Griffin Canoe Club. We also had paddlers from other disciplines (canoe polo, sprint and marathon) competing in this slalom event. Altogether this made for a fabulous atmosphere by the river.

After a morning of practice for the novices, while the more senior paddlers contributed to enhancing the river channel with some rock moving to compensate for the slightly lower than anticipated water level, the course was set and racing began. Our starter, Ron Elliott, from the Hunter Valley, provided some excellent commentary interviewing each paddler prior to their start and then broadcasting an entertaining fact over the radio as he announced their start. The award for cheering goes to the Slay Squad (the novice junior girls from Western Sydney Whitewater club) who all ran along the bank cheering on their coach Alex Zarb in each of her runs.

The K1W event was won by Georgia Rankin (WSWC) with silver going to 15 y.o. Ada Mackie (WSWC) who put down two clean runs in an impressive performance, with Alex Zarb finishing with the bronze. The U16 division in the WK1 was taken out by Ada Mackie, with two upcoming paddlers from the North Coast, Maggie Carr (BRCC) and Kate Delaney (BRCC) taking our silver and bronze respectively. It was great to see so many U12 and U14 K1W novices competing in their first ever slalom race. For all of these girls it was a great learning experience and they all embraced the experience. The Gold medal in the K1W U12 division was won by Khloe Schwarzer (WSWC) who impressively didn't miss a single gate in her two runs. Lara Wylie (WSWC) took the silver with Sophie Lennie (WSWC) winning the bronze.

The C1M was won by Kaylen Basset (WSWC) with Declan Ellis (BRCC) taking Silver and Lachlan Bassett (WSWC) taking bronze. Dominic Curtin (WSWC) took out the C1M U18 division and Luke Delaney (BRCC) took out the C1M U14 division. It was exciting to see some of our U12 boys competing in C1 in the U14 division, with Tom Billaut (WSWC) taking the silver and Jye Deaves (WSWC) the Bronze.

Tokyo Olympian Lucien Delfour (WSWC) took out the K1M, with Declan Ellis (BRCC) taking silver and junior paddler Dominic Curtin (WSWC) taking the bronze, as well as the gold medal in the U18 division. The U16 division was won by Matt Delaney (BRCC) while up and coming U14 paddler Sevan Billaut (WSWC) put down a fast and clean second run to take the U14 gold medal and finish 6th overall. Local paddler **Craig Elliott (BGCC) took out the K1M Veteran class** beating Chris Tubb (WSWC) by just 0.31 secs. Long-term regular competitor Kevin Songberg (RCC) won the vintage division ahead of his C2 teammate Gary Nelson.

Alexandra Zarb (WSWC) supported by her own cheer squad, won gold in the C1W with two clean runs, with Georgia Rankin (WSWC) in 2nd and local paddler **Emily Hogbin-Bourne (BGCC) in 3rd**. Ada Mackie followed closely behind finishing 4th overall and first in the C1W U16 division. Ada and Emily teamed up to take up the C2W division with fast and clean second run.

In the plastic boat class, Lucien Delfour showed the speed he needs for the Kayak Cross Time Trials winning the Gold Medal. Nick Herrald won silver and Louise Capel won bronze in this division.

It was fantastic to see so many old and new paddlers racing, and we look forward to seeing everyone on the water at the next event. The organisers would like to thank all the volunteers, Parks ACT and PaddleNSW for their support and assistance, without them the event wouldn't have run so smoothly.



Julie Curtin

BGCC 24 Hour Challenge – 2023 version – by Jeremy Cook

It's just not right to let the club's *24-Hour Challenge* die quietly.

Most ultra-marathon events have you stuck in a boat from start to finish – on your own or with a partner. But the *24 Hour* is flexible, especially with the *16 Hour* option available. As Canberrans we don't have to travel to the event and would most likely be going for a paddle at some time over the weekend anyway, so why not enter solo or as a team and hang-out with other club members for a bit? Wednesday time-trials have, by their nature, a competitive element but the *24 Hour* is only as competitive as you want to make it. etc. etc.

“So, Jeremy, stop proselytizing and do something about it.” Well, I tried.

First ... I asked a few people if they would form a team and ‘fill in the gaps’ paddling a couple of one-hour stints each while I paddled 1.5 hours on/1.0 hour off. But there were no takers.

Next ... I decided just to do it myself. Nine 1.5-hour stints (on a 2.5-hour rotation) at 8.5 kph would get me over the magic 111 kms in 24 hours and still allow a 2.5 hour break over-night – you don't get that luxury doing a Hawkesbury.

So, at 10:00am on Monday 13 November, two days after the event should have been held, I hit the water in the Vajda Voyageur *sans support* but with food, dry clothes, sleeping bag, spare paddles, etc. in the back room of the shed.

Everything went to plan on Day 1. Without Helen *et al* to count laps, I relied on my Garmin to keep track of distance. This enabled me to go *off-piste* and venture into and beyond the water ski area for a bit of variety. Doing laps, I was able to leave bottles of Powerade and water on the end of the pontoon. Because I was only paddling 1.5 hours at a time, I was able to wander up to the shed between sets for a banana, creamed rice or almond finger biscuit. All pretty cruisy.

By the time the sun set I had covered 50.21 km at an average moving speed of 8.8 kph or 8.6 kph overall (remember I was stopping at the pontoon to rehydrate). I had seen water rats, literally 100s of waterfowl, some very friendly swans, carp jumping and even a golden koi carp swim by my boat.

But this was when reality hit. It was a new moon (i.e. no moon) and the sky was clear so no reflected artificial light. There were no cyalume sticks marking buoys and hazards. There was no safety boat. Discretion overtook valor and I had to accept that my *24-Hour Challenge* was going to have to be a *16-Hour Challenge*.

I was back on the water on Day 2 with the regular before-work paddlers and before the powerboats so I could head up the river to ‘the chain’ through the mist that hovers over the water at that time of the morning. Beautiful. Calm. Serene. And the best thing – I wasn't even sore or tired from the day before after my enforced night's sleep.

With a final one-hour stint to go I had covered 27.5 km for the morning. Andrew W joined me on an embarrassingly uncoordinated final lap and kept me distracted from behind (I didn't want to be accused of wash-riding) as I thrashed my way around at 8.8 kph using up the last of my strength.

86.52 km over 10 hours 2 minutes 49 seconds within a 16 Hour window. The planned 111 km in 24 hours had been within range if not for the moonless night.

... Maybe next year!

Jeremy



*Note to 24-hour paddlers: **The 2024 date has been set: 7-8 December!***

Start planning for it now. Gather your team, or go solo. Train by entering the PNSW Marathon Series races, the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic and/or the Mighty Murray Paddle. Discover how much fun it is to camp at Molonglo Reach with like-minded paddlers, warming your toes around the fire, toasting marshmallows and eating chocolate mud-cake washed down with a bubbly brew for breakfast when it is over. And having a bit of a paddle in-between times. There is a chance to compete against other clubs (if they come to challenge us) or to just enjoy a friendly local comp.

Enjoy your Christmas and New Year break – but don't forget the 2024 24-Hour Paddling Relay Challenge or 16-hour friendly.

Helen Tongway.

Canoe Polo Newsletter

Choo Choo! The Polo Express is rapidly approaching the Xmas Station, and the little bit of peace and joy a week free of polo brings.

At the beginning of November, we headed to Summer Series #2 - Penrith, armed with two teams of ladies friends + Thomas, and peppered with some Aus Team girls to really seal the deal. Three BGCC paddlers attended the Aus Women's Camp the day before, assisting in preparing the U18 and Senior Australian Women's Teams prior to the Oceania Championships. The competition featured some delightfully drizzly Sydney weather, with our teams snagging a 1st, 2nd result in B Grade.

Upon our return to the Canberra Motherland, silly season has begun in full pace. We've been on boat parties, club parties, fixing boat parties and of course Wednesday Nights Where Maria Feeds Us Delicious Delights parties. We also attended the Southern Cross

Club Awards Night, where Adam Hofmeyer had been nominated for Volunteer of the Year. He didn't win, but we did get a sufficient number of canapes so still felt victorious. We also had a balloon-tastic time at the BGCC Presentation Night, with three awards going to the polo-tastic crew. Worry not though, being party animals has been no excuse to lighten the training load, with six sessions of polo happening on our beloved lake shores each week.

As you read this witty recount, four of your favourite BGCC members will be getting shellacked by Kiwi paddlers much larger than them at the Oceania Championships in Hawkes Bay, NZ. Congratulations to the following athletes for the Australian Team selection:

Senior Men

Adam Hofmeyer

Matthew Gates (reserve)

Senior Women

Laura Kleinrahm (VC)

U21 Men A

Matthew Gates (C)

U21 Men B

Ethan James



Adam Hofmeyer, Ethan James, Laura Kleinrahm and Matt Gates

Thank you for travelling Canoe Polo Rail, we hope you've enjoyed your 2023 journey, and can't wait to have you on board with us again next year!

LozzaK



What is this at the bottom of the garden?

It looks like a CP repair-party!

Wednesday Afternoon Time Trials

11/10/23: Colin Calderwood, K1, 20:51; Ali Thwaites, K1, 24:25; Neil Fargher, LR1, 24:33; Russell Murphy, LR1, 25:01; Karla Palecek, K1, 26:31.

18/10/23: Neil Fargher, LR1, 24:37; Ali Thwaites, K1, 24:39; Aaron Broughton, TK1, 35:26; Liam Broughton, JTK1, 35:26.

25/10/23: Kolya Cook, K1, 19:24; Matilda Stevenson, K1, 19:24; Andy Osborne, OS1, 23:35; Russell Murphy, LR1, 26:37; Louise Yabsley, K1, 27:37; Lucy Imerson, OS1, 28:30.

1/11/23: Kolya Cook, K1, 19:18(PB); Andy Osborne, OS1, 21:27(PB); Ali Thwaites, K1, 24:03(PB); Jeremy Cook, K1, 24:35; Russell Murphy, LR1, 25:05; Gary Bergman, OS1, 25:46; Aaron Broughton, TK1, 41:34; Liam Broughton, JTK1, 42:19.

8/11/23: Andrew Webber, OS1, 19:27; Colin Calderwood, K1, 20:50(PB); Andy Osborne, OS1, 20:58(PB); Russell Murphy, LR1, 26:57; Aaron Broughton, OS1, 35:25; Liam Broughton, JK1, 35:34.

15/11/23: Marcelo Cabezas, C1, 20:23; Tom Long, K1, 21:06; Haydon Johnson, OS1, 21:24; Louise Yabsley, K1, 23:17(PB); Ali Thwaites, K1, 24:26; Russell Murphy, LR1, 24:39(PB); Neil Fargher, LR1, 24:53; Jon Bell, OC1, 27:50.

22/11/23: Marcelo Cabezas, C1, 19:37(PB); Andrew Webber, OS1, 19:41; Tom Long, K1, 21:02(PB); Colin Calderwood, K1, 21:25; Andy Osborne, OS1, 21:34; Louise Yabsley, K1, 23:53; Karla Palecek, K1, 26:19(PB); Gary Bergman, OS1, 26:29.

6/12/23: Andrew Webber, OS1, 19:06(PB); Andy Osborne, OS1, 21:23; Ali Thwaites, K1, 24:55; Lucy Imerson, OS1, 26:45; **2 Laps:** Louise Yabsley, K1, 46:46.

13/12/23: Marcelo Cabezas, C1, 21:08; Colin Calderwood, K1, 21:10; David Pammenter, K1, 22:06; Ali Thwaites, K1, 24:32; Jon Bell, OC1, 25:21(PB).

Hawkesbury Canoe Challenge, 2023

We are fortunate to have three articles extolling the exciting adventure that is the nighttime paddle down the mighty Hawkesbury River.

First up we have the official narrative from the race organisers.

111km..... By the light of a full moon!!

– by Kent Heazlett Event Coordinator / Race Control Hawkesbury Classic Paddle

We promised you the moon and boy, did we deliver. What a magical, magical night on the Hawkesbury River last Saturday night. We hope that all the paddlers, volunteers and land crew have had a chance to recover from a BIG weekend.

This was the 44th Hawkesbury Classic Paddle and this year's event saw 150 paddlers face the starter's gun at Macquarie Park, Freemans Reach late on Saturday afternoon.

Of the 150 entrants drawn from all over New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, 145 entered the 111km event and 5 entered the Windsor to Wisemans 65 km event. With a smaller field than is normally the case, "starts" were compressed into three with the first "start" at 4.00pm and the last at 4.30pm.

The event, conducted under Aquatic Licence AQL36499, issued by Transport for New South Wales, was conducted in near perfect weather conditions with warm temperatures in the afternoon and a full moon lighting up the river for most of the night.

Along the 111 km route, we had 19 Safety Checkpoints, so on average, there was a Safety Checkpoint every 5.8 km along the length of the river.

Of the 19 checkpoints, we had 10 land-based checkpoints and 9 checkpoints aboard vessels. These vessels were in the main, crewed by either NSW SES or Marine Rescue NSW (Hawkesbury).

In addition to the checkpoints, the SES and Marine Rescue (Hawkesbury) supplied a further 17 vessels to carry out search and rescue and to control the car ferry crossings at Sackville, Lower Portland, Webbs Creek and Wisemans Ferry.

In total, we had over 280 volunteers working throughout the weekend ensuring the smooth operation of the event and the safety of paddlers.

Supplementing the human involvement in the event, we trialled GPS Trackers supplied by TrackMeLive. These trackers proved to be a resounding success and will be in place for future events. The use of GPS tracking is a real “game-changer” for events such as ours. It was reported that family and friends of the paddlers followed the event on their electronic devices in many interstate and overseas locations.

Again, thank you to the very kind benefactor, who covered the cost of the trackers for the trial. Only two safety matters were reported to me, as Race Control and to Mark O’Hara, as Safety Control over the weekend.

The first involved a resident of one of the ski parks in the Wisemans Ferry area stupidly hitting golf balls at the SES search and rescue boat. Wisemans Ferry Police were alerted in the belief that they had a boat in the vicinity of the Del Rio Music Festival, but the matter was resolved by the manager of the ski park.

The second matter happened at around 0255 Hrs on Sunday and involved a kayak capsizing when the paddlers ventured too close to the stationary ferry and became entangled in the ferry cables. The ferry was stationary, with its orange flashing light extinguished, on the port (Wisemans Ferry township) side of the river. Fortunately, neither paddler in the double kayak was injured and they were taken onboard an SES rescue vessel and taken back to Checkpoint I at NSW Water Ski Federations Ski Gardens at Wisemans Ferry where they withdrew.

A Safety Checkpoint de-brief was held on Thursday night and all checkpoint leaders in attendance were very happy with the safety network surrounding the event. They especially were impressed by the fact that paddlers were calling out “Thank you” as they passed the checkpoint.

Feedback from paddlers and land crew has been overwhelmingly positive and with luck we can double the number of participants for next year.

The fastest craft down the river got to the FINISH in 8 hrs 35 mins elapsed time and the slowest craft finished with a time of 18 hrs 37 mins.

Each of the paddlers in this year’s event was required to raise a minimum of \$250 and thus far, paddlers have raised more than \$55,000. This is on top of nearly \$4.4 million that has been raised previously for our principal beneficiary, Arrow Bone Marrow Transplant Foundation.

It was wonderful to have this iconic event back on the river after a three-year hiatus caused by COVID and last year's disastrous Hawkesbury floods.

Even though the event keeps the local Hawkesbury residents off the river for a few hours on Saturday afternoon with the exclusive use of the river between Macquarie Park, Freemans Reach and Sackville, the overwhelming response from the Hawkesbury businesspeople and land-owners is that they are thrilled to see the area returning to normal, post COVID and floods.

This year's event was sanctioned by Paddle Australia and received sponsorship from Hawkesbury City Council and a grant from the NSW State Government.

We could not have an event of such magnitude without the support of all the volunteers who help out at the START (Windsor Paddlesports Club, Nepean Blue Mountains Prostate Support Group, Ross Winters and his mates from River Canoe Club, Lane Cove River Kayakers, John Duffy and his Registration Tent crew etc. etc.), all the 19 checkpoint crews who give up their entire weekend for us and then the massive support given by NSW SES, Marine Rescue NSW (Hawkesbury) and WICEN NSW (a unit of VRA Rescue NSW).

We received sponsorship from

- Hawkesbury City Council,
- Bennett Paddles,
- Vaikobi,
- The Retreat at Wisemans,
- Expedition Kayaks,
- Tony Hystek for the sound system at START and many others.
- We also received a grant from the NSW State Government



Next Up we have a contribution from **Richard Fox**

The 44th running of the Hawkesbury Classic was a cracker! Numbers were down on previous years, but conditions were as good as you could expect in windy October.

You can train the house down and prepare thoroughly - I did both - but you have no control over moon, tide or weather conditions on the night. And you have very limited control over your double partner's preparation either.

In 2023 I teamed up with David Lowe from the Penrith Kayak Club to take on this challenge. 'Jake' is an experienced Hawkesbury Classic paddler and run-away winner in Div 4 in the 2023 Marathon Series. I chose well! Together we contributed 212kg of human flesh poured into a laden SLR2 (heavy layout), so the stars, the moon and anything else celestial needed to line up for us to lug 237kg down a twisting and tidal river.

We started with an ebb tide, though a strong headwind mitigated its benefits for the first two hours. At the two-hour mark we were averaging a touch under 12 kph, so we knew we were on song. Six minutes out of the boat at Sackville then off again to negotiate the big twists and the flood tide. This tide was powerful and speed retarding, but Jake nailed the navigation.

12 minutes at Wisemans Ferry with the promise of a changing tide 70 minutes onward. Company and competition was never far away. An SLR2 from the central coast (a record holder to boot) just kept going. But Jake and I knew we had superior speed. We stopped three times, the third a de-cramping stop, and three times we were overtaken. With eight KM to go we again took the lead of the pack, and the sniff of success grew stronger. We weren't going to surrender out position again!

Brooklyn Bridge is a wonderful sight on an early Sunday morning as you round the corner at checkpoint S!! Jake and I crossed the line in a time of 9 hours 14 minutes and 18 seconds. Our moving time was 8 hours and 52 minutes. We were the third boat to finish and second fastest on the night. It took me only 30 minutes longer to fly Melbourne to Tokyo two days later!

I was wired with caffeine and didn't sleep a wink that night. But I was very satisfied! I implore BGCC paddlers to think seriously about taking up the challenge of the HCC. It is a truly fantastic event.

Richard Fox

*Richard Fox and
David Lowe*



And finally, the experiences of **Danielle Winslow and Bob Collins**

Danielle and Bob's 2023 Hawkesbury Classic

I read with interest, Richard's article covering his experience with this year's Hawkesbury. His statement is right on the mark: *'You can train the house down and prepare thoroughly - but you have no control over moon, tide or weather conditions on the night.'*

Danielle and I last did the Hawkesbury just prior to Covid – in 2019. We'd had a full year of hard 20 km Divisional Racing behind us, with additional training in between each race. As a result, during the Hawkesbury we performed well, pulled up well at the end and did it in about 10hrs 50mins and conditions were good.

What a difference, 4 years later! Due to family commitments, Danielle was unable to regularly get to the Divisional races during the year and I only did about 3 or 4. The often very windy weather on our lake hampered distance training, so, overall, we knew we were underdone.

Our plan was just to finish, which we did, in 11hrs 59mins and 42secs and ended up 37th out of 88 full distance paddlers.

For us, a much slower time than in 2019, but for many of the hardened PNSW Divisional Marathon racers, times comparable with other years. It basically shows that, often, the most successful Hawkesbury participants come out of these Divisional races.

As Richard said, you have no control over the conditions on the night and, in the past, we have raced through all sorts of adverse conditions, so it was no surprise to find that this time, the 20 km headwinds negated the benefits of the tide for the first 5 hours or so. It was also quite cold so, by the time we made Wisemans, we were tired and very cold. A quick change of clothes, a mouthful or two of hot chips and we were off again.



The wind abated for a while and then it blew up again, so we were struggling to get to 9 kph, in fact we struggled all the way to the finish, but there was no thought about not finishing. We also did not see another boat between Wisemans and the finish – the result of the poor turnout of boats.

Originally 105 boats entered of which only 94 started – of the 88 Full distance paddlers, 11 Did Not Finish (over 12%) and of the 6 Wisemans Dash, 2 Did Not Finish.

The big plus on the night was the brilliant full moon that lit up the whole river – if we were not so stuffed it would have quite enjoyable.

A huge thanks goes to our land crew: good friend, non-member Paul McCarthy and our own Jeremy Cook. Your land crew is as equally important as your preparation and no land crew = no race.

Our crew were brilliant, they helped us get set up and on to the water at Windsor, were there ready with everything we needed at Wisemans and heaved us and the boat out of the water at the finish (there was a lot more 'heaving,' getting me out of the boat).

As Richard pointed out, it is a fantastic event, but there needs to be a good roll up of paddlers. Anyone thinking of tackling an ultra-marathon should indeed consider the Hawkesbury but keep in mind that it is one of the toughest ultras on the calendar. I personally rate it tougher than the 5-day 415 km Murray Marathon.

Will we front up next year. Probably not, Danielle will be increasingly busy with her young family's sporting commitments and this Hawkesbury really knocked this 'old fella' about.

If Patricia is still keen and this old body holds together, perhaps I will stick to the NSW Divisional races in 2024.

Bob Collins

"Hi Paddlers,

I am putting together a multi boat-class event on Lake Tuggeranong, which is planned for Saturday, 13 January 2024. I have the support of Rowing ACT to open the event to water-craft other than just rowing. The format for the event is based upon the Henley Rowing Regatta, in which each race consists of two boats from which the winner progresses through to the next stage - similar to that of a tennis tournament.

I would love to hear if the kayak community have any interest in attending.

Thanks,
Vince Townsend,
President - Lake Tuggeranong Rowing Club 0429 586 110"





About ENHANCE Healthcare:



Enhance Healthcare was established by **Peter Garbutt** and **Celina Miller** in 2001, initially providing Massage and Chiropractic Services to the Gungahlin and Canberra community.

Over the past 15 years, our service offering has increased to include;

- **Acupuncture;**
- **Soft Tissue Therapy;**
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Our business is built with the customer at the forefront of everything we do. We have established a highly skilled and professional team, across multiple disciplines with the specific view of delivering the best possible client outcomes.

At Enhance Healthcare we listen to our clients, diagnose the problem properly and utilise the combined skills of the ENHANCE team to resolve whatever the problem may be. We then follow up to ensure our clients are happy with outcomes

Pete Garbutt is also a long-time member of the Burley Griffin Canoe Club

Denman Prospect Clinic Address

Shop 25, 3 Felstead Vista,
Denman Prospect ACT 2611

Mitchell Clinic Address:

Unit 10, Level 1 141 Flemington Rd
Mitchell, Canberra ACT, 2912

Opening Hours:

Monday	5am – 8pm	Tuesday	7am – 7pm	Wednesday	7am – 8pm
Thursday	7am – 7pm	Friday	7am – 6pm	Saturday	10am – 4pm
Sunday	10am – 4pm (Mitchell only)				

Ski Weekend: 16th & 17th December

4 club members joined Bob Turner at the south coast this weekend to work on some ocean ski skills.

Jacque and I traveled up on Friday afternoon and enjoyed a lovely dinner with live music and lots of celebrating locals at Smokey Dan's in Tomakin after setting up our camp site at Barlings Beach.



On Saturday morning, after a leisurely walk and breakfast out, we met up with Bob, Lucy and Andy at Corrigans Beach. The first hour was spent on refining our re-entries, learning how to carry out an assisted re-entry and just getting comfortable with sitting side on to the swell etc. We then paddled out past the headlands into more open water. As we were quite comfortable with this, we paddled for a few kilometers before turning and learning how to catch runners back to the beach. We played in the waves for a bit longer enjoying the conditions, which, while not perfect, were good enough for us to get the hang of surfing and carrying out 2 assisted rescues!

The rest of the afternoon was spent pleasantly – reading, chatting, walking, etc. Dinner was from the local Thai van and eaten at our camp site with a couple of wines – the only thing missing was the fire! Very pleasant.



Sunday morning we met with Bob, at Guerilla Bay. After checking the weather conditions, he thought we should be able to paddle out around the headland and head north, doing a scenic tour around several of the other bays. Sounded good, so we enthusiastically headed off.....not for long though! Once past the headland things got rather messy with a decent swell and wind-blown waves. Lucy seemed to be quite confident paddling with Bob out the front while Andy and I both were hesitant with Jacque trying to encourage us on. Once Lucy fell out though and we were trying to sit and wait in all the slop, both Andy and myself decided heading back was the best move – carrying that out was easier said than done... we did make it though and all headed back to the calm waters of Guerrilla Bay, where we played in the waves for the next hour or more, at times being able to run a few waves together. Such good fun.

We all decided (not for the first time) that we should do this more often. It's only just over 2 hours away, feels like a mini-holiday with great scenery and food. The water is beautiful, clear and warmish. While I love flatwater paddling, training and racing the ocean offers a whole new perspective. And Bob is happy for anyone to come out and paddle with him or learn new skills.



Patricia Ashton

Marketplace

ELIO K1 For Sale – great for new K1 paddlers!

Super-light to carry and fairly stable. Suitable for paddlers under 75kg. No leaks or issues with the boat. Only selling it because I rarely paddle it these days.

\$1350 Message Tammy at 0424 299 057



For Sale: FENN Mako XT Double

This ski has spent its life in a boatshed and has had minimal use so needs to go to a new owner who will love, cherish and use it

The most stable double ski produced by Fenn

- *Construction:* Carbon vacuum Weight: 20kg (ridiculously light for a double kayak!)
- *Length:* 7.5m
- *Steering:* Single adjustable front foot-well
- *Self-drainers:* Both front and back foot-wells
- *Handles:* At front foot-well and on the tail
- *Water bottle holders:* Both front and back, plus straps behind rear seat. Includes fabric kayak sock for protection, and a spare carbon rudder
- *Price:* \$2000 ono
- *Contact:* emily@resultz.com.au if you are interested



Wanted to buy: sea kayak / single / sit in / plastic. Preferably with rudder and storage hatch(es).

Contact: Alec Gray, 0459 785 660

Recreational Paddling

Recreational Paddling/South Coast Waterways Touring

The Eurobodalla Kayakers organise fortnightly kayak touring trips along different waterways between Narooma and Bateman's Bay. It's a great way to enjoy nature and explore coastal waterways with experienced paddlers.

There is no fee to participate and trip maps for each trip are available from the website www.eurobodallerkayakers.com - or you can just turn up at the meeting spot and simply follow the leader.

The trips average 12 km in length, suit stable craft such as sea kayaks, and there's a 30 min stop for BYO morning tea.

Most trips are round-trip paddles and have been well-planned to favourably factor in tidal movement.

Send an e-mail to eurobodallakayakers@gmail.com to request being added to their mailing list to get detailed information about each upcoming paddle.

You need to be able to comfortably paddle 12 km (if I can do it, you can), have the usual safety equipment and be reasonably self-sufficient on the water. Hope to see you there.

BGCC contact: Yvonne Best thewritestuff007@gmail.com 0423 118 990.



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

If you have contributions for the next edition, please get in touch robertba28@gmail.com