

WELCOME paddlers to the November 09 edition of our newsletter...

The mighty World Masters Games has come and gone, and one would expect a little breathing space before the next round of frenetic paddling activity.

Not so!

By the time you read this, the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic will be run and won, the next rounds of the Ocean Series and Fenn Series Open Water races will have happened, and more events will be upon us.

Looking back at the World Masters Games, I am still astounded at the numbers of paddlers emerging from the woodwork to rekindle their sporting heritage. In general, they were well rewarded for their efforts.

Both Canoe Polo and Slalom ran especially well, and were exciting events to watch.

Unfortunately, the Marathon competition was beset with difficult paddling conditions on both days, worsening in the afternoons, resulting in the shortening of the 7km course to just 5km. In those very windy conditions, there weren't too many complaints from the older competitors. The 21km doubles event was marred with the unfortunate passing away of a competitor, and though the safety boats on-hand provided immediate first aid, there was nothing they could do. It demonstrated that even in elite competition, apparently healthy paddlers can suffer major health issues and good first aid response is a vital consideration for all events. The question of compulsory pfd's for competition has raised its head again, and there will surely be an energetic discussion on this topic in the coming months. (... continued on page 3)

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Photo competition entries

Congratulations, birthday wishes

A feature on the freestyle championships

And of course links to race results and the calendar for an action packed November and December

Masters games pictures and profiles



A special thank you...

A big thankyou to all the Masters Games volunteers, some of whom travelled from Melbourne to participate.

In particular, thanks to the Vollies (and important officials, pictured left) for all the hard work done during the Games.

(President's message continued from page 1) The Sprints were always going to be difficult to manage. The 1000m event had 117 races scheduled in one day, with just 5 minutes allocated between starts. Once again, the wind came up, causing chaos and capsizes at the starts, and the programme soon began to fall behind time. The regatta was eventually called off due to failing light with a K4 event ready to go at the start. Teams were not happy, and decided to make their own race of it back to the finish anyway!

We can learn much from the WMG. At most of the events, a core of experienced, qualified officials was assisted by a team of volunteers who handled everything from car-parking attendant to medals presentations. Some volunteers had chosen not to compete in order to assist in the organisation of the competitions. When things started to go awry, they were the first and last point of contact, and in the case of the sprint medals and numbers allocation, were subject to some pretty average behaviour by some of the competitors who had nowhere else to vent their frustration.

Unfortunately, more than one volunteer was heard to say 'first and last time' about their volunteering experience. It does call into question the expertise and decision-making of the officials in charge of these events, and how information and explanation is provided to competitors when things start falling apart...

This leads me to the topic of event and volunteer management on a general level. Whether the event goes well or badly, most often the competitors leave without another thought for the volunteers working on, often late into the night. None of our competitions could happen without the assistance of volunteers, some from within the sport, others with no connection with paddlesports at all. These volunteers, who have come with all good intention to 'lend a hand' or 'do their bit', are often left in the firing line, trying to provide explanations to competitors for decisions made by the event officials.

If we want to continue to attract volunteers to our events we must find ways of protecting volunteers from the negative aspects of their work. The onus must surely pass to the event organisers, and in particular the chief official, whose responsibility it is to determine the rules of competition, the total and thorough briefing of event officials and volunteers, and to ensure that there are fall-back plans in place to cover any problems with equipment or other aspects of the event. Problems at the Sprint regatta included a lack of communication between the officials and competitors explaining the reasons for delaying starts, the last-minute inclusions of competitors in events on the day, and most distressingly, the holding up of starts to enable late competitors to get to their event. This was surely a recipe for disaster, and led to amalgamation of events later in the day, the withholding of medals and the rescheduling of some events to the following day. The amalgamations disrupted the event schedule and threw the starting lists into disarray, and results for some events have still not been published. The unfortunate volunteer at the medals desk had her work cut out trying to perform her duties according to the rules, while some competitors were arguing about their rights to medals, and others going for the 'snatch and run' approach.

Regardless of the organisational difficulties with this event, the result of the WMG as a whole has seen renewed interest in competitive paddlesports, and numbers especially in the NSW Marathon and Sprint series should see healthy increases in 2010. The ongoing problem of maintaining an adequate number of qualified officials remains, and new blood is badly needed to ensure succession plans are in place when some of the more experienced officials decide to call it a day.

The need for qualified officials does not end with competition. PaddleNSW is involved in many non-competitive events where numbers of paddlers, often inexperienced, are attempting ambitious paddles. Clubs will benefit from having qualified members they can rely on to ensure adequate standards of safety are in place, and that a commonsense approach to event management is adopted.

PaddleNSW aims to conduct training for all ACAS qualifications including Guide, Instructor and Coach as well as start, finish, scrutineering, and other official duties in the near future. Stay tuned!

Tony Hystek, President PaddleNSW Inc



Photo competition

There was a glitch in receiving emailed photos – we had none for months and now suddenly some great entries – enough for a whole page to show case your talent!



left: Colin Cussel (President of the Far North Coast Canoe Club) is doing a great job of trying to entice us there for a paddle with this great shot from April 2009.

“This is a view of some paddlers on an early morning paddle at Julian Rocks off Byron Bay, NSW. This is one of my favourite paddle spots. An informal group of paddlers regularly Paddle around The Rocks at 7 am on Sunday mornings, leaving from Clarks Beach.”

Information about paddling around Julian Rocks can be found at:

<http://www.fnccc.canoe.org.au/site/canoeing/fnccc/downloads/Byron%20Bay%20paddle.pdf>

Right - you could be mistaken for thinking it is a mirage! But, yes, there really are whales in the harbour and even the occasional submarine.

That is right folks - the only mirage in these pics is Liz Winn's kayak at North Head on 31 May 2008.
Photos by Paul Bourne.



Diane Cooper sent in this picture of LCRK doubles at the Sydney World Masters Games. The two “In Synch” paddlers were surprised, more than the photographer, at their stroke of luck!

Please do keep the entries rolling in – we’ll show more in the December edition and any not used this year will automatically be entered for next years photo comp.

Send in your paddling and water ways pictures to admin@paddlensw.org.au



Happy 10th Birthday to Penrith Whitewater stadium

On November 1st the Penrith Whitewater Stadium turned 10. The day included the National Freestyle Competition, Canoe Polo, Sprint & Slalom demonstrations, and ‘The Gift’ a recreational paddling race where paddlers who are game enough paddle down the course without a spray deck. The best submarine master won the race!

The whitewater stadium is now a major sporting and recreational facility in western Sydney and has been running on a self-funded basis for the past 10 years during which time Penrith Whitewater has facilitated whitewater rafting for

hundreds of thousands of people, recreational paddling for enthusiasts, kayak instruction for juniors and adults, and has continued to facilitate slalom training and competitions at local, state, national and international levels. The stadium photo above is from the website: <http://www.penrithwhitewater.com.au/>

Congratulations to David Llewellyn, who has been nominated as the NSW Rhodes scholar for 2010. "He will do his Drs in Philosophy and study malaria and do some work in Africa. Davo will most likely discover the cure" says his fan club in the Slalom world where he has already proven himself as a skilled paddler.

And they're off and racing...

The other big event on the calendar in recent weeks was the **Hawkesbury Classic**.

Race results are available on the classic website at: <http://www.canoeclassic.asn.au/results/>

Best wishes to those mad marathoners - the Murray Marathon is just weeks away.



We look forward to hearing how the "YMCA Murray Marathon" compares with the "Red Cross Murray Marathon"!

And remember – Christmas pudding counts as "carb loading"!

PaddleNSW Events calendar

The events calendar is online at our website: <http://www.paddlensw.org.au/november.html>

A few notable highlights to watch for are:

- | November | December |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Canoe polo<input type="checkbox"/> ski racing<input type="checkbox"/> rec paddles<input type="checkbox"/> a 24 hour event in Canberra<input type="checkbox"/> National Sea-Kayak symposium coming up on 27-29 November, at Currumbin, Qld including a huge expo, seminars etc, see the brochure online<input type="checkbox"/> MWKC raffle to win a ski | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Canoe polo<input type="checkbox"/> 20 beaches ski race<input type="checkbox"/> The YMCA murray Marathon<input type="checkbox"/> Christmas – check out our website for some great ideas on where to shop or arrange some lessons for a paddling-loved-one! |



Keep an eye on our home page for the latest news <http://www.paddlensw.org.au/index.html>

Some highlights from the National Freestyle Championships

"Arran Mills came second in the C1 Freestyle event. Admittedly there were not many entrants in the C1 but as a fifteen year old he did really well considering he has only been paddling C1 for a few months and that was his first time playing in "Fryer" (a feature at PWS). So from a RCC club point of view we not only have a member who came second Nationally in the C1 event but he is also the youngest C1 paddler who if there was a youth category would be the national Youth Champion." Text by Richard Alder(PaddleNSW member).





Congratulations Arran!

Winners and Champions:



The 3 boys with medals are all members of PaddleNSW - Liam Corr, Ben Cant and Aaron Mills.

“Fit, fun and forever young” was the motto for the Masters Games – these guys sure did us proud!

(right) Australians Gary Nelson, Kevin Songberg from New South Wales and Chris Runting from Melbourne pick up the over 50 team slalom race.

Many believe the teams events are the most exciting to watch. - three paddlers race through the course to collectively be the fastest team in the WORLD!



50+ yrs K2 start line .

Masters battling it out – Lawrie Kenyon is in the background (right)



Masters games profile: Anna Ward (Canoe Polo)

6th in the World in the Women's!! She declared “The World Masters Games was brilliant fun!”

Going in they knew their team The Sirens was likely to win the wooden spoon, and at best come second last. It was made with players from Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Canada. The first games held to expectation with a thrashing and zero goals. All the players had a great time. On day 3, the first game started at 7.30am, and by 8am their first goal was scored!! The cheer from the sideline was like winning the whole competition!! Thanks to Aqua Ducks! and Karianne!!

Our final game against the other NSW / Victoria team (The Sharks) was the favourite. It was a fun game, in good humour from all - and 3 goals!!! Thanks to Heidi for coaching Anna even though she was on the other team. They lost... significantly, but had a ball all the same.

And you know -they came 6th in the world! out of 6 ;-)



Masters games profile: **Trevor Williamson** (pictured rear)

Trevor must have been one of our more senior entrants. He was saying that he competes in canoe polo for the thrill of the game, the team spirit and the sharp hard exercise. Marathon is more of a test for endurance but maybe its insanity that brings one back to compete in the Hawkesbury and Murray.

He got hooked only 15 years back when hiring a boat to entertain the kids and now he's tried everything but sprint racing – "still something to try"!

His preparation for the games was 2 relatively short paddles in the 6 weeks prior to the games, some canoe polo and a bit of cross training like bike riding, walking and regular yoga.

He had great games in polo and won both his marathons – single 60+ sea kayak and mixed doubles 50+ sea kayak (and had opposition in both races)

When asked about the organisation of the Games, he could only provide good words about the Canoe polo. He was not so impressed with his 4.75 hours wait at accreditation for a piece of plastic that was never used. And the wind "was a piece of cake" for sea kayaks in the marathon race.

Not over yet, he still has to cross lake Alexandrina (end of the Murray) to complete the full length of the Murray from the Hume weir. He would like to thank his mix double marathon partner Cathy Miller, who is an inspirational paddler.



Masters games profile: **Bruce Baldwin** from Just Paddlers.

Bruce got into paddling to learn to Eskimo roll and look where it's got him. He competed in slalom, marathon and sprint. Like many of the paddlers, he competes for the fun of the competition. He felt sorry for those who didn't cope with the wind and is already back training for the next Games in four years time. He would like to thank his support team, many of whom were total strangers. For an international event, he wished it was a little better organised.



Masters games profile: **Richard Barnes**

Richard at the start of the Hawkesbury Classic (2008) showing three of his classic and well known features:

1. his huge happy grin
2. the famous number 111 plate
3. and that canoe polo shirt!

This was his first WMG BUT 29th Hawkesbury Canoe Classic. **AND CONGRATULATIONS Richard for being awarded AC 2009 Masters Paddler of the year. (Yes – Richard dressed up his T shirt with a bow tie to attend the black tie awards evening on the 14th November - Editor)**

Richard seems to be driven by the challenge; to prove to himself that he's not getting old and to make more friends to go paddling with.

He started paddling in Scouts, back in 1976. Although he broke the old fibreglass canoes on both his first trips on the Macquarie, he was hooked. There was no special games preparation. (he must paddle nearly every day of the week anyway – Editor)

He assures us that he met his goal. Polo in particular was a grand reunion of past players, a party to rival the positive spirit of the 2000 Olympics. They lost to the friendliest of Canadian teams in their final, and just beat Sydney friends in the Masters games profile: Richard Barnes (continued from previous page)

closest of semis, so the competition was exciting. In slalom, he swam in both C1 runs and one C2 run, notwithstanding



he used a topo duo. In marathon, Marg Cook and he surfed home in a thrilling rollercoaster ride powered by the strong tailwinds neck and neck with competition from the Sunshine coast. closest of semis, so the competition was exciting. In slalom, he swam in both C1 runs and one C2 run, notwithstanding he used a topo duo. In marathon, Marg Cook and he surfed home in a thrilling rollercoaster ride powered by the strong tailwinds neck and neck with competition from the Sunshine coast. Plans are already underway to paddle across Bass Strait, via the cheese and cream delights of King Island.

Richard would like more friends so to end with a small advertisement for Canoe Polo in Sydney on Tuesday evenings, and marathon time trials on the Lane Cove River on Wednesday evenings – please refer to the Paddle website for more detail.

Masters games profile: **Dianne Chellew** (continued next page)



(Dianne, pictured left, photo by Phillip)

Although Dianne is another paddler driven by the social side of going to races she declares that it's also the enjoyment you get from training and keeping fit. The mental challenge of the longer distance Marathon events and struggling to control your mind to push yourself to continue is part of every race. But the satisfaction lies in the adrenalin rush you get when you sometimes win or sometimes race not to be last in a division.

She started paddling kayaks in winter to stay fit for summer surf club ski and board events and it just grew from there."I really enjoy

anything to do with the water. (Salt water of course, I'm not real keen on muddy rivers)."

This was Dianne's answer when asked what she did to prepare for the Games.

"I have been preparing for these games since March when I had to have surgery and chemotherapy related to my original Breast Cancer surgery 11 years ago. The surgery was much more complicated than originally anticipated and both my surgeon and initial physio said I would not regain a full range of motion or full strength in that arm. I contacted my oncology nurse who was able to find a physio who was more positive in outlook and we commenced working. I had physio right up until competition started. For me it became the focal point of proving the surgeon wrong. This has been part of my method of coping. I set myself a goal and work towards it one step at a time. I worked with weights and on general fitness before being able to paddle again. It was really only the last 8 weeks that I could do intensive paddling work."

Her goal was to compete in the single and double Marathon Events, and set a time goal. And as you do, she entered Sprint as an extra. You can hear the excitement when she describes the experience. "I exceeded my wildest dreams when I beat my time by 5 minutes and won a silver medal in both singles and double Marathon Events. I then went on to compete in the sprint events to win a medal in every distance from Marathon to 200 metres. I won medals in K1, K2, and K4 boats. I paddled single, mixed doubles with a Hungarian, as part of the Ukrainian K4 and in a Women's K4 14 years my junior. I was ecstatic with my results!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"



She thought that the organisation of the Marathon Events was superb. "To get over 400 competitors on the water and on time in what were very difficult weather conditions was a testament to the organisers. The water safety and first aid was very well organised and performed well. The organisers were able to move all presentations inside the Nepean Rowing club at short notice. Unfortunately the organisation of the sprint events was not so good. Extreme weather conditions on the first day meant that boats were difficult to hold and races were slower than usual resulting in a long day. Everyone was relieved when weather conditions for the final two days improved however this was not reflected in the organisation. Timing mechanism seemed to fail but the most disappointing aspect for me was that overseas competitors had to leave before being presented with their medals or experiencing the joy of receiving a medal on the dais where previous Olympians had received their medals. I understand and appreciate the fact that all this work is carried out by volunteers but at no stage did any chief official or Australian Canoeing Official come out of the tower and explain to the crowd on Sunday afternoon what had gone wrong and why they weren't going to receive their medal. I felt that this was very poor and reflected badly not only Australian Canoeing, but on Sydney and Australia. Many of my overseas friends have passed comments and negative comments between these games and Melbourne World Masters in 2002 have been made."

Dianne will now rest and recover and "make an effort at house work and cooking!" She thanks her long suffering house husband who cooked and cleaned while she exercised, her physio and oncology nurse who worked tirelessly to get her the competition and to her paddling partner and coach Darren Lee who unselfishly gave of his time and motivation and encouragement. She would also like to thank the Livestrong Foundation, which is Lance Armstrong's Cancer Foundation who also provided support and information and were happy to have her represent them by paddling in their foundation colours. A special thanks to her 4 grandchildren who came up to the regatta centre with their scooters all decked out in Australian flags and rode up the path yelling "Go Nanny!"



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(Dianne, pictured right, photo by Phillip)

