



Don at Sackville

Sub-10 hours

Don Johnstone

BoB 1

Time: 9:53:18

Time allowed for mishaps: 10 minutes

What a night! I made it and hit my target time. 9:53:18, which was 19th fastest overall, and 10th fastest single, which is even better than I'd hoped. Thank you to all who donated and/or wished me well. I raised just over \$2000 which is a great contribution to a worthy cause.

My race really had three parts. The preparation – which I loved – where for the last couple of months I got increasingly focused on not only completing the Hawkesbury but doing so in sub-10 hours. I lifted the lid on Ian Wrenford's amazing HCC calculator which tracks the currents at each point on the Hawkesbury River at each time of the night, and allows for features such as the bath-tub effect (whereby the bottom of the river starts flowing out before the surface water when the tide turns). I studied the fluorescent dots on Tom Holloway's fantastic graphic comparing previous Hawkesbury times with

TT times until my dreams (or hallucinations) were filled with fluorescent dots. I fine-tuned my nutrition systems and even did minor repairs on my ski.

The first 85km – where I paddled alongside Trevor – taking turns at the lead. We'd done a lot of training together and are similar paddlers and easy company, so it was helpful to both of us to have a washride for about 42km. Only two things went wrong during the race, and both occurred in the first 500m. Firstly, when I turned on my Garmin, it showed 'low battery' even though I'd fully charged it the night before – they're temperamental gadgets. Therefore it was a godsend to have Trevor beside me to flag which part of the river had the most favourable currents, and whether the next turn was left or right (it was a very dark night, and we hit more than a few obstacles: jutting-out trees, buoys, Trev even hit a pontoon). No Garmin also meant I had no idea how fast we were going, and couldn't spend the entire race doing mental calculations about the speed needed to crack 10 hours. The second mishap was that Trev had rudder problems just after the start so had to pull over and spend 5 minutes tinkering. Given the tightness of our schedule (I'd factored in 10 minutes for mishaps) this didn't bode well.

And then the last 15km. We'd stopped twice – as per schedule – for two minutes at Sackville and for eight minutes at Wiseman's Ferry. We were 10 minutes behind schedule at Wiseman's, meaning that there was no buffer for further mishaps. I was getting twitchy but still felt I had enough energy for a final effort. I gradually ramped up the speed until Trev said I should go ahead, and kindly advised that the next turn was to the right. I then went full tilt on my own, not on the optimal course because I was extra careful not to take a wrong turn at Spencer, nor to hit any further obstacles near the river's edge. I also realised that I hadn't seen any boats pass, though I expected the fast doubles to come steaming past at any minute, so I thought I might even have a chance of line honours. Luckily the conditions were perfect in the final stretch across to Brooklyn Bridge and I went like the clappers. As soon as I finished, I asked the crowd what the time was, and when they said it was 2:10am I let out a whoop of joy because it meant I'd hit my target of sub-10 hours. As it turns out, two boats passed me in the dark so I was third for line honours, but I'll remember this paddle for a very long time – the night I joined the ranks of the half-decent marathon paddlers.

Like Clockwork

Trevor Nichols

BoB 1

Time: 10:11:33

Rudder adjustments: 2

A wise man once told me that every Hawkesbury is different and every year there is a story. While the wise bit may be debated, he has done 22 races and knows the river as well as anyone. I was sceptical about how different this one could be to my other three. Surely, I would be out of stories with previous rudder issues and with paddling partners getting sick en route?



Trevor at Sackville. Another quick rudder repair?

The weather forecast from four days out told us there would be strong W to WNW winds until sunset. Not a problem in the V12 I have had for six months or the small rudder I have had for one month...

Craig Salkeld and Darren Williams put their hands up to road crew. Gold. Looking forward to the back rub at Wiseman's more than ever. I did a few Lane Cove familiarisation paddles this year and at the one from Mooney Mooney, heard Tom Simmat say that low tide at the finish will be at 2:15am. After this water would be rushing back in, making Bar Point and Milson's Passage a less appealing proposition in a V12 with a small rudder. Fortunately, for me this 'famil' paddle included an actuary (a remarkable breed of individual who can actually do sums without a calculator!). Enter Don Johnstone, who told me his goal was to break 10 hours and to do so, needed to take heed of Tom's advice and ideally finish before 2:15am. This made starting in the early BoB heat more appealing and, taking up the challenge, I agreed to paddle the race with Don for as long as possible.

On the day, Darren and I got to Windsor around 12:30pm and nabbed a shady spot to set up. It was a hot 30-degree day, which wasn't the biggest talking point – the wind was. The westerly was strong and some gusts were even whipping up clouds of dust. What to do now? All the others told me to stay with the small rudder as the wind was due to die down just after sunset. So, naturally, I did the sensible thing and changed to my long rudder. However, 15 mins before the start I convinced myself the forecasters had indeed got it right, so I changed back to the small one.

4pm and it was show time. I said bye to the family and road crew, got on the river, located Don and confirmed plans to work together. "Ready, go." The adrenaline kicked in and I decided I needed to be the first under the bridge. Darren got the photo from the top of the bridge as I went through, sweet! "Piece of cake" I thought to myself, "this is going to be an easy night..." Then I 'lost' my steering, so I told Don to carry on whilst I pulled over. He decided to wait for the 5 mins it took for me to tighten the rudder up, after dropping the Allen key in the water, of course.

We got going and quickly reeled in the slower boats and set our sights on the faster BoB starters. The westerly wind and runout tide were great, we averaged over 12 km/h. We caught John Duffy shortly after the Cattai checkpoint and he told us there was only Rob Llewlyn-Jones ahead. At 20km, we got to some of the sections heading north and straight into the wind and resulting waves. This made it feel like the race had begun for real. Despite the wind, we got to Sackville within a few minutes of our planned time and had a very quick turnaround. This was good. Now came the 30km slog into the tide to Wiseman's.

It got dark very quickly and the lack of moon coupled with nonexistence of red glow sticks on obstacles became an issue as we kept close to the shore to stay out of the worst of the current. I went head on into a jetty, which scared the shite out of me, but I impressed myself as I didn't fall in... that would come later. Additionally, I got caught up in two trees that had fallen into the river. The wind continued until quite late and I was getting cold in my boardies and thin rashie. After what seemed an age, Don and I got to

Wiseman's for the scheduled 8-min stop. It was great to see a smiling Craig and his wife Beth as we arrived. That reception alone was worth a couple of hours of motivation. First up I changed into my thermal longs and put my second rashie on. Second thing was to ask the rugby score – bugger! Then it was time for a quick feed and the Voltaren back rub – thanks Beth.



Trevor and Don flying through Pitt Town

Now we had the tide with us and needed to do the last 40kms in 3:40 to make 10 hours. We went through the overhead wires at Gunderman's needing to do the last 20kms in 1:50. The tide was now flowing out strongly and all was good so we agreed no more stops. Next turn was a righthander so yelled to Don to come right, not only did he not hear me, but I fell in. I have had enough practice at getting back in to the V12 to think this would be no big deal. Due to being tired this was very hard and took me about five goes to get back in. All the tossing and turning of the boat caused my rudder to loosen and a few kms later it started slipping again. Luckily, I know this section of the river well and so pulled over at Gentleman's Holt, opposite Spencer, to tighten it. It was not the quick, clean job I was hoping for, as I was not able to get the pin back into the top of the rudder shaft and kept dropping things. All the while, I kept hearing paddlers coming past as the minutes tick by, which did nothing to steady my hands or nerves. Finally, I swapped to my spare rudder and got going after what was more than 10 minutes according to my Garmin.

Thankfully, there was another great welcoming party at the end. Craig really earned his stripes as he had realised I hadn't given him any warm clothes to change into after the race, so he had raided his son's wardrobe for a thick jumper for me. Pleasingly, Don broke 10 hours, so was also over the moon with his race.

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the race, as my shoulder issue from the Myall did not play up at all. As usual the training paddles with mates made it worthwhile. I was very happy to get a 4th PB in my 4th race and am already looking forward to the next one as everything will go like clockwork. Trust me, I work for a bank.



Both happy at the finish line!

First Single Home

Brendan Trewartha

Men's Vet 40+ ORS1

Time: 8:48:56

Bogans: too many!

The windy start to this year's race nearly had me DNS with the front roof rack sliding half off the car in the wind. Some duct tape secured the ski until we got there with 2 min to get through registration.

The pace for the front pack was too much for me so I sat back into a steady solo grind that lasted all night. Sackville and a quick water change then off to Wiseman's in the quickly enveloping darkness. A few kms out and I was hugging the shoreline only to have headlights shine on me from a boat ramp followed by a massive bang as a two-tooth bogan smashed a rock into my boat putting a hole right through it.

No stopping so I pushed onto Wiseman's where it was great to see mates and my Dad for ground crew. Dad had a jam sandwich and bottle of water to keep me going for the next 40km, but a couple of trips back to the car and I was off shivering and weaving all over the place until I warmed up again. After a 2nd ferry and 15 min at Wiseman's I knew I was up against it to get to the end before low tide, so I increased the pace. More bogans, this time with fishing lines casting past my ear, fortunately no more rocks.

Then the dark gave way to phosphorescence in the water, and large fish. So many I buried my paddle in two of them nearly throwing me in!

Got to Spencer with the pace going really well, I almost hit 4 min splits then ran out of water, which made 10 litres since the start. Only an hour to go so I pushed on and finally saw the bridge, and all over for one more year. Not sure of my exact time, but was told 8:47 which is not a PB but still first single home. Great to see Craig and Dad.

Great to see Fitzy and Trev finish both with PB's. Off to repair the boat and ponder next year which will be race five and over 50.



Brendan giving 'steely eyed' another meaning



Who has more fun, the paddlers or the landcrew?



Still got a smile going through Pitt Town? Yes!

Rudders and Regurgitation

Peter Fitzgerald

Men's Vet 50+ ORS1

Time: 9:19:05

Rudder nerves: Plenty!

The windiest start in 22 years. Even getting there was a bit of a drama as Craig Salkeld drove 500 metres down the road from home and my ski moved to 45 degrees on the roof with a gust of wind. Re-strapped in tight and we headed out.

This was probably the only time I felt brave (or stupid) as I did not listen to Matt B. I visited his pop-up shop at the start three times wondering whether to use a surf rudder or shark tooth? He said it's bad – he'd use surf rudder...the wind was meant to drop a few hours into the night so I decided WTF – if I fall in due to wind, I will lose 10-15 minutes and time will be irrelevant, so I will change the rudder then.

I nearly tipped in a few times especially hitting a handful of tree branches in the dark and about ten boat mooring buoys. One tree scratched my cheek at eye level but I flinched at exactly the right moment to miss my eyes. The best part is that I stayed upright!

I thought I may have damaged my rudder hitting things so got it checked at Wiseman's. Luckily it was ok, but I do now carry a spare!

I felt a bit ill and vomited at about the 40-50 km mark, all over my ski. After all these years I still can't find what to snack on for energy, so usually I've just had three GUs and about three litres of water all night. My Gatorade mixed with SIS gels, tailwind and berocca made me throw up. It turns out Gareth was near me in the dark: "Fitzy I thought you were going to crash after I heard you throwing up in boat." The truth is I felt much better after that! Reading my 2018 write-up, and it says I ate exactly what I had this year: 3 GUs and water. So I guess that's all I need.

I had two stops this year: Sackville to numb my shoulder which flared up and the usual Wiseman's stop. And then I had to wait for ferries at both. Ground crew Darren and Craig were great – very experienced at what might be needed.

Achieved a PB as I edge closer to 9 hrs. Yes, I've done 22 but we used to do the race as mates with a goal of just finishing and it's only in the last five years since joining Lane Cove that we have done it competitively. All have been under 10 hours, but I think I have a sub-9hrs in me.

And yes, number 23 next year!

A tale of Buoys and a Jet ski

Tom Simmat

Men's Vet 70+ LRec1

Time: 10:46:38

Collisions: 2

A long time ago I did an article for Lane Cove, explaining that the secret to good times in ultramarathon racing is not to stop. Just keep going.



Tom on his way through Pitt Town

Given the tides, this year I was trying for under ten hours. Given also that the tides were only against me from Sackville and through the Big W, and my night vision is now non-existent, I decided to try a bit of technology and follow the orange line track on my GPS instead of relying on torchlit maps. That is suffer the tide against me and not worry about hugging the bank.

Well soon after the start I had the orange line on my GPS but the little arrow I was supposed to be following simply stayed at Windsor. I did well above my target speed coming into Sackville, got held-up by the ferry and stopped at Sackville to swap my un-telling GPS for a torch lighting up my maps.

I know this part of the river reasonably well and had some lights about my speed to follow, but still manage to hit maybe 20 yellow boat mooring buoys and those two new long pontoons that go well into the river.

The yellow buoys did pop past the boat but on the last right turn going into Wiseman's, bang and crunch I was brought to a dead stop when I hit the big red navigation buoy. Although I found myself twisted sideways in the boat, I managed to stay upright, but it took me a few minutes to recover. Worried that I had split the hull, I hurried toward Wiseman's, then just as I was about to yell out my number at Wiseman's, bang, straight into what appeared to be a black jet ski. Dead stop again.

The fantastic mudlarks repaired the bow while I had coffee, water and bananas. Off again the tide with me, only to be caught by the Wiseman's Ferry. However, this year I managed not to get lost at Low Tide Pit stop where the river narrows and turns right.

Trying desperately to pick up some time and not miss the tide through Milson's Passage, I cut the corner at Spencer and ended up on the mud. I thought I was doing OK skimming over it but it did appear to go on and on, till I realised I was not going anywhere. I ended up straddling the boat and pushing myself off with my feet. Very muddy. So the tide turned against me just before Bar Point and I had a big battle from there to the finish.

Total time lost:

Three ferries	12 minutes
Sackville Stop	6 minutes
Buoy crash	2 minutes
Jet ski crash	1 minute
Wiseman's Stop	20 minutes
Caught by tide	8 minutes
Total time lost	49 minutes



Tony comfy in Chris J's K1...

A Double-Record Goal?

Tony Hystek

Men's Vet 60+ K1

Time: 9:39:00

Mud flat crawls: 1

Tom Simmat established the Men's V60+ K1 record a few years back, only to have it whisked away by Warwick Nichols shortly afterwards. I needed to get that record back in Lane Cove hands!

The campaign started a month out, when I did my first 30km 'training' paddle with Naomi in a

K1 kindly intercepted on its way to Kimbriki Tip. I passed it back to the keeper, it being totally unsuitable for purpose...even I had to climb out of the cockpit with a stepladder. Word got out, and several options were kindly offered, including an M Sonic from Anjie and a Spirit XXL from Chris J. The M Sonic was still a bit squashy, while the Spirit fitted the bill perfectly, and after one more training paddle with Naomi up Moonee Moonee Creek from the HCC finish (if anyone hasn't done this paddle, put it in your bucket), I felt that I was sufficiently unprepared to tackle the HCC...so be it!

You might have cottoned on to a conspiracy here...I certainly couldn't confirm that.

Naomi and I were both pretty even in speed, though Naomi was substantially fitter as her results showed. In a blustery tailwind, we set off in pursuit of a couple of doubles, but relinquished their washride not long after as they were just a bit out of reach of our speed comfort zone. Even so, we were sitting on high 13's from the start...exhilarating. When the Sackville ferry was held for us as we charged toward the blue lights of the gateway, we knew it was going to be a good night. "You're the last" was the friendly comment as we sprinted across the wires.

Leaving Sackville, the horror stories began unfolding for some paddlers. I chose this race to break several cardinal rules, including trying equipment not yet trialled. My new deck torch, angled up to illuminate the trees ahead, spent more time illuminating fish as we plunged through stand-up rolling waves kicked up by the incoming tide. I can't say enough good things about the Spirit, as it was incredibly settled and stable in this horror stretch, surfing downwind and trying to avoid obstacles as we hugged the bank. Were it not for Naomi, I'd have been heading back upstream after having had some 'issues' with my Garmin (read: not doing my homework!). Back on track, she was able to extinguish my troublesome deck light and we plunged into darkness.



...but with a barnacle firmly in tow!

After a number of near misses with fallen trees through the Big W, we finally made it to the Wiseman's straight, where Naomi paddled away into the distance, steely determination in her eyes to break the Women's K1 record. There wasn't much that was going to stop her, and I was going to ensure I wasn't one of those things!



Some serious mud going on at the finish!

crater' seat (you know where that is headed...). Not once did I even think about my seat, thought I must admit I did use it in the Yukon race last year. That much I got right!

A lightning stop had Naomi away while I was still feeding my face...as the wind dropped and the water became glassy, I decided that I'd just ease back and cruise home. It was my entertainment to see Naomi's cyalume dancing away in the distance, sometimes closer, sometimes further. Fortunately, the ambient light was sufficient to highlight every wrong turn I made, especially the last one at Spencer, where I broke the cardinal rule at the cardinal marker and cut the corner. Digging an even bigger hole, I convinced myself I could paddle across it while the inevitable outgoing tide just drained the swamp leaving me high and dry. The only way out was to crawl on hand and knee back the way I came, probably around 50 metres. That 10 minutes was never going to be made up, and Naomi charged on to the finish line owning the record she so rightly achieved. I ambled in a while later, but with a big, dirty smile plastered all over my face. It was all I could do to resist hugging my exceptional landcrew Alanna while covered to my waist in Hawkesbury Mud...

I have to thank Chris J for his unbelievable generosity and trust. That boat was one of the best craft I have ever paddled down the Hawkesbury, helped by my 'bomb



Smiling landcrew at Sackville before darkness fell.

Flow

Naomi Johnson

Women's Open K1

Time: 9:28:55

Faster HCC women: 0

I have to confess that I had been looking sideways at the Open Women's K1 record for the Hawkesbury for most of the last year, long enough to over-analyse the possibility of breaking it from just about every angle, to do some seriously nerdy reading on ultramarathon nutrition, and to have convinced myself that paddling at the Marathon World Championships the previous weekend was perfect preparation for throwing myself 100-odd kms down a river on my return to Australia.



Naomi excited to be off the 5:15pm start

I had certainly done the distance, putting in a solid 30km paddle most Sundays through the year as part of my training schedule, and felt the strongest and fittest I have ever been. Following a particularly trying 2018 family paddle from Wiseman's to Mooney Mooney, I was pretty confident that the club's Bettong K1 could deal with just about everything that the Hawkesbury threw at me, offering a level of comfort and stability that my own boat rather lacks when faced with half-metre waves! The two things I was less sure of were my ability to sustain the same pace for so long when the furthest I had previously paddled solo was about 40kms, and how I would deal with the mental side of the race in a K1. I am, after all, a paddler who can get into a serious funk about a LCRK time trial if I'm on my own and not feeling great.

It was with these dilemmas at the forefront of my mind that I approached the HCC committee about starting with the Men's K1 classes – the 2005 record had been set when all K1s started together, and with a sub-10hr goal I would be in for a very lonely paddle going off the 4:30pm start. As it turns out this request and the subsequent back-and-forth about start times might have been the secret ingredient I needed; nothing fuels a fire quite like the words 'women' and 'non-competitive' accidentally ending up in the same sentence!



At the start line in the Bettong

5:15pm start time granted, I managed to keep up with Tony off the start line and on to the back of a double. Even with the wind, the first 25kms felt like a breeze chatting with a couple of doubles, and cheering on the BoB2 boats we gradually started passing. Oddly, I felt my worst in that final stretch into Sackville. Heavier paddlers seem to be able to punch through this sort of wind, perhaps because they're sitting a bit lower in the water, and so suddenly my nice cosy spot on Tony's wash was a fight to stay in contact and a seriously draining one at that. Added to that, it was sunset, and even in a nice comfy Bettong the light and water do disturbing things to my sense of balance at the end of a day. With an eye for opportune Sackville Ferry timing, Tony suddenly hit the accelerator while I was thinking that a minute's rest to consume the rest of my Windsor-Sackville food wouldn't be the worst idea.

Sackville was briefly out of the wind, and Frazer's lightning-fast pit stop gave me a renewed sense of focus. We were a few slim minutes ahead of my spreadsheet ETA, my water bladder was now cold, and I was no longer feeling unnerved by the setting sun. The 5-or-so kms after Sackville were far from plain sailing with wind and standing waves, but I was feeling in control of the boat and honestly more worried that those we passed might fall in than about my own stability. I was also beginning to think that my disadvantage in a

headwind becomes an advantage in waves with a strong tail wind, as I kept getting carried forwards on these darkened peaks without doing much at all. As the waves died down I somehow managed to regroup with Tony (at that point I wasn't 100% sure whether he was just ahead or just behind), and then reminded him which way was downstream after F!

Nearing Wiseman's and Tony was stopping more frequently to stretch, which at the time I assumed was due to seat discomfort. My efforts at being a supportive barnacle were met with the instruction that "you don't stop paddling". Given the circumstances, I interpreted it as "leg it, I like to do my pilates in private", and so set my sights on Wiseman's and my nuked potatoes. I was sick of the taste of sugary foods, perhaps the one mistake I'd made in my race preparation, and those two potatoes tasted like heaven. I remember eating, changing tops, a flurry of people, and then throwing myself back into the darkness to finish what I had started.

A few kms out from Wiseman's, Gary and David from Penrith emerged from the darkness behind me, despite having paddled off into the sunset ahead of us at before Sackville (it turns out their spreadsheet had allowed for a break at Sackville and a full 15 minutes at Wiseman's). I sat on their wash for a while as the water gradually began to glow, but couldn't quite hold the pace comfortably. Gary and David's set of cyallumes disappearing into the distance and no other boats in sight. Suddenly I really was out there alone with the self-talk I had so feared as my company, Despite being almost midnight I was feeling good, and the GPS told me I was travelling along much faster than my spreadsheet speed. I had started the GPS six minutes before the race, then turned it off at Wiseman's (battery change), then forgotten to turn it back on for six or so minutes after that. So perhaps add six minutes to what I was seeing? I finally allowed myself to think the record might be a possibility.

There is a feeling that we talk about in music as 'flow state', where you're totally immersed in the physical and mental process of what you're doing, but where your brain is no longer getting in the way of itself by providing unhelpful thoughts or distraction. In sport we might call it being 'in the zone'. I was aware of my body and my paddling, aware enough to think about economical technique and good rotation, to acknowledge that I wasn't hungry but needed to eat, aware of the GPS as it confirmed the speed of the tide. Yet I was also thrilled by the river at night, by the glowing water which burst into fireworks as I paddled through schools of fish, by the silhouettes of the



The shock of Mooney Mooney lights

surrounding hills and oh so many stars. Past low tide Pit Stop, finally the geography of the river down here was making sense to me. *I can totally paddle 20kms.* Round the mudflat after Spencer, out into the big wide stretches beyond and the water was still mercifully calm. I knew the tide was supposed to turn at 2:30am. *I can totally paddle 10kms.* Bar Point, final gel for a final effort, Milson's Passage, and though the rushing energy of the tide was beginning to fall away it was still going out. *I can totally sprint 200m!*

The lights and noise of Mooney Mooney boat ramp felt like a shock to my senses after the wonderful darkness of the river. The first few minutes of being pulled out the boat and helped up the boat ramp by Frazer are some of the blurriest of my night. Somehow, with the tidal help below Wiseman's, I had picked up 15 minutes on my target of 9h45 to finish in 9:28:55, well and truly breaking the K1 record. It wasn't until later that I learned how close Tony was behind me. Should I have sat up and waited?

Paddling the HCC was a fabulous end to a wonderful and rather crazy year of paddling for me. The support of the whole club, and Tony and Frazer in particular, has been such a big part of it, and I really don't think it's possible to do a stellar Classic time without a well-oiled support structure like the one that Lane Cove has in place. It feels pretty amazing to have posted that time, and cracked such a long-standing record. But maybe my biggest achievement for the night was silencing the mental chatter and realising the joy of being in flow with such a river!

Short Tales of a Long Night

As told at the Lane Cove BBQ on October 30th, 2019.



David Veivers

BoB 1

Made it to Wiseman's

David's first year in a ski, he "was going well until Sackville" then "fell in at about the 40km mark" once darkness descended. "The thing that finally undid me, though, was that I ran into a tree somewhere between G and H, and then I was just happy to finish at Wiseman's." He gave a big shout-out to the landcrew at Wiseman's for helping him get up the "rock face" there!

Richard Barnes & Annette Dawson

BoB 2

Time: 16:15:49

Richard started out by giving his dad a shout-out for the impressive "38 years of landcrewing" he has now achieved! A new paddler, Annette "committed to going down to the Maroochydore canoe club every Saturday, and every Saturday I'd get a report from her which was the number of capsizes she'd done rather than the number of kms she might have paddled! She was so enthusiastic about paddling. We had planned on about 17 hours and we snuck in just under that." Richard also pointed out that there's a whole different world of paddling down the back of the pack. "You were all worried about getting around the Spencer corner – there was so no mud there for us! There was also no Lane Cove at Wiseman's, which was a bit sad."



Kenjie Ogawa

BoB 1

Time: 14:33:30

Kenjie has now entered a very elite sub-group of Hawkesbury paddlers, completing his 25th Classic this year. He mused on the importance of taking on big challenges, even when life throws up huge obstacles like cancer. His secret to Hawkesbury success is "no training and lots of eating" (we assume this means on the night) and to "trust your stomach". This year, he was "hit in the ribs by a fish" and described early-morning at Bar Point as a "suicide crossing" where he was mostly paddling on just the one side!

Eric Filmlalter

Bob 1

Time: 12:40:50

As told by Duncan: Both he and his family were so appreciative of what the club was able to provide in terms of support, particularly at Wiseman's and Sackville. Eric achieved his best time in three attempts, which has spurred him on to re-join the club on a more permanent basis, and he promises to show his face at time trials and races in the coming year.



John Law

Wiseman's Dash

Time: 9:01:00

"I was talked into doing the Dash, and to be honest the furthest I'd ever paddled was 15, maybe 20kms. My landcrew was hopeless, he was even worse than I was. I got to Sackville, got the phone out and called him and said 'where are you' and he said 'yes, just leaving now!' So I told him to go straight to Wiseman's Ferry...where

he called me to say 'I can't find it, I've been driving around for hours and gone back and forth on the ferry.'" Finally reunited with his landcrew, John was pretty happy to have achieved that Dash. More next year perhaps?

Chris Thompson

Bob 1

Time: 12:43:30

"Big thanks to all the volunteers, who helped me get my heavy boat in the water at Sackville, and who helped me get out at Wiseman's. I didn't have any equipment failures; it was more my eyesight that bugged me up." Sackville to Wiseman's with no bifocals on, he had to keep stopping and to bring the maps and compass into focus, then after a change of glasses at Wiseman's "my compass stopped working!



Eric caught up to me at Bar Point, got caught in an eddy and then was suddenly 60 metres in front of me. My wife said I was coming into the finish going 'Eric, is that you Eric?' to a French guy on a SUP."

Peter Harris

Sackville head-honcho

"As area boss at Sackville, I opted out and stood as spotters. One thing I noticed near the end of the race is that paddlers had the LCRK pink cyallume next to their number on the back of the boat. This was a great help with spotting them, and it would be great to do it again next year!"

Wonderful Volunteers

As ever, it is the Lane Cove support crew of fabulous volunteers who make the night what it is. It all starts long before race day, with coordination of newsletters, gear, familiarisation paddles and boat wrangling. On the day itself, there are those up at the crack of dawn to collect BBQ meat, deliver gear in vans and set up, those who talk their nervous paddlers into getting on the water in the first place, and make sure that they get back in at Sackville and Wiseman's. Those who get numb toes in the name of photography at Pitt Town, and in the name of mudlarking at Wiseman's, who stay at checkpoints to see the final boats come through.

Paddling the Classic is hard work, but you made it a fantastic and much easier night. Thank you!

HCC Organising Committee: Roger Deane, Richard Barnes

Equipment and transport: Oscar Cahill, Tony Hystek

HCC direct volunteers: Matt Swann (starter)

Photos: Ian Wrenford, Jana Osvald & Marg Fraser-Martin

Windsor set-up, sales and decamp: Oscar Cahill (about 18hrs of service!), Paul van Koesveld, Alanna Ewin and Fiona Rae

Sackville checkpoint team: Peter Harris (coordinator), Paul van Koesveld, Tim MacNamara, Adrian Clayton, Justin Paine, Merry Surgiato

Wisemans checkpoint team: Caroline Marschner (coordinator), Tony Carr & Chris Deng (catering), James Farrell & Alanna Ewin (catering supplies)

Mudlarks: Mark Hempel, Jeff Tonazzi, Chris Johnson

To Action Sound (Tony & Alanna) for providing the van and equipment at Windsor, Wiseman's and the post-HCC LCRK BBQ

Hawkesbury Famils: Duncan Johnstone

River guru, tactician and dark arts: Tom Simmat

General coordination, hassling and systems: Rich Yates, and Ian Wrenford

Report author and editor: Naomi Johnson



Fab LCRK volunteers at Sackville (left) and Wiseman's (right)