



KAYAK KAPERS

2006 HAWKESBURY CLASSIC

October 2006

Who's in the big race – and who isn't

Some familiar faces will be missing this year from the Lane Cove River Kayakers lineups which won the Commonwealth Bank Cup for the past three years as the most successful club in the Hawkesbury River Classic.

But the times recorded and enthusiasm shown by our paddlers in recent Classic familiarisation paddles show we will be launching a strong challenge again in 2006. After all, we reckon it's our trophy now and we expect to again bring home the bacon.

Last year out of 42 members participating we won 14 categories and broke 4 records. 4 were in the top 10 on handicap.

This year it looks as if those missing in action will include (in no particular order):

John Greatehead and Tony Walker (1st, 60+ LRec-2 2006)

Nick Chai (1st, open LRec 2006)

Bruce Goodall (1st, 40+ LRec 2006) – moved to Windsor Canoe Club

John McNamara and Derek Simmonds (1st, 50+ LRec-2 2006) – Derek is regaining his strength after a shoulder reconstruction and is landcrewing this

(1st, 40+ UN-2 2006) – Ian is recovering from a skateboarding shoulder injury, Graeme hopes to landcrew

Jade South (1st, open UN 2006 and fastest single at 9.17.25) – returned to New Zealand.

One of the features of this year's race, on October 28-29, is going to be in the ladies open K4. High fliers Marg Cook and Merridy Huxley, who won the ladies 40+ K2 last year, are teaming with Manly Warringah power paddlers Buzz Powell and Sandra Burwood. They're going for the record of 10.10.52 and it would be a brave punter who bet against them. Marg and Merridy hold the records for the ladies 40+ TK2 and 40+ K2 and Marg has the record for the ladies open TK1. Buzz is in the books three times for best times in the ladies 40+ K1 and UN-1 and the mixed 40+ K2.

Urs Mader was the fastest paddler over 50 last year in winning the 50+ Long Rec. This year he's teaming with Arni in the mixed 50+ Rec-2 and they're going for the long-standing record of 12.26.28. The way they're training they could make quite a mess of that time.

Bert Lloyd and Trevor Williamson, having been forced to withdraw last year when they competed in a triple, are going back to basics this time and will do the race in a double and hope to better their PB of 11.02.

James Mumme and Matt Swann, having raced last year in singles, will test their fast-improving double combination in a new boat this year.

Matt Blundell is going to launch an assault on the 10-year-old open K1 record of 8.29.28. Last year he pad-

Ready and raring to go

Competitors in the 2006 Hawkesbury Canoe Classic are expected to include:

Matt Acheson, open K1

Roger Aspinall, 40+ MRec, Flash

Richard Barnes, 40+ K1 (this will be his 26th Classic)

Matt Blundell, open K1

Christie Brown, ladies open UN, Sonic

Marg Cook and Merridy Huxley (with Buzz Powell and Sandra Burwood from Manly Warringah), ladies open K4

Craig Elliott, open MRec, Marauder

Tim and Oliver Hookins, open UN-2, Supersonic
Bert Lloyd and Trevor Williamson, 50+ LRec-2, Mirage 730

Urs and Arni Mader, mixed 50+ Rec-2, Nomad

James Mumme and Mat Swann, 40+ LRec-2, Vulcan

Glen Orchard, open Sski or UN

Kenji Ogawa, 50+ MRec

Justin Paine, 60+ MRec, Mirage 530

Ian Purves, 40+ TK1

Nick Ridgwell, B-or-B, Storm

Don Rowston/? (David Warlters has had to withdraw), 60+

Tom Simmat, 50+ SRec

Julie Stanton, ladies open UN, Sonic

Rob Vallis, open UN, Sonic

Michael Venter (with Steven Howcroft from Windsor), B-or-B-2

Dean Wayne, open MRec, Flash

Barbara Weber, ladies open MRec

Graham Willis, 50+ LRec, Horizon Challenger

dled as far as Wisemans before pulling out because he had a big international adventure race the following weekend. He's in good shape and will give that record a big shake.

Martin and Louise Dearnley lost the advantage of their age classifications last year when paddling together in the mixed open K2. This year Martin will go alone in the 50+ MRec while Louise and Georgia Peacock, who have come along in leaps and bounds during the Winter Marathon Series, only have to finish to set a record in the junior ladies K2.

And, as usual, LCRK will be a major contributor to the officials arena. Roger Deane ("I'm back!") will again be race controller, with Mark Sier assistant race controller, and Rob Grozier will be chief scrutineer. Others will be officials at various posts and lots are landcrewing.



Marg and Merridy...racing in a K4

year, John is lacking recent paddling due to housebuilding but hopes to landcrew

Deb and Neil Meade (1st, mixed open TK2 2006) – Neil is chasing triathlon glory in the big multisport gathering at Noosa

Ian Hofstetter and Graeme Jeffries

Good form in Classic trials

Lane Cove paddlers continued their good form in the second and third Hawkesbury Classic familiarisation trials. Watch out for them when the real racing begins on Saturday October 28, from 4pm onwards. Congratulations to Lyle Mead and Windsor Canoe Club for their excellent organisation of these events.

Windsor-Sackville, 32km, Aug 5

Bruce Goodall, pairing with Windsor's Christine Lalor who was the handicap winner of last year's Hawkesbury Classic, had the fastest time of 2.21.55 in an event favored by a following wind and tide. Unfortunately Bruce has switched to Windsor.

A bunch of LCRK paddlers was not far behind: Julie Stanton 2.36.06, Roger Aspinall 2.36.07, Rob Vallis 2.36.09, Tim Hookins 2.40.54 and Ian Purves 2.41.40.

Also under the 3-hour mark were Urs and Arni Mader 2.44.12, Tom Simmat 2.51.03 and Frank McDonald/Sam Sharbine 2.54.24.

Behind them but happy with their times were Graham Willis 3.12.12, Rob Grozier 3.27.56, Justin Paine 3.27.56, Barbara Weber 3.37.14 and Nick Ridgwell 3.37.56.

Wisemans Ferry-Spencer, 30km, Aug 26

The weather was good and the tide against early, then it turned. Lane Cove members showed they are serious about their Classic preparations this year and provided nearly 40% of the field.

A pack of LCRK predators demonstrated the depth we have in marathoning, taking out 4th to 9th spots - Rob Vallis 2.27.12, Julie Stanton 2.29.37, Roger Aspinall 2.29.39, Matt Swann/James Mumme (proving very fast in their new Vulcan) 2.30.26, Ian Purves 2.30.28 and Tim Hookins 2.30.45.

Under three hours were Craig Elliott 2.35.28, Tony Walker/John Greathead 2.36.41, Sam Sharbine 2.37.15, Urs Mader 2.37.17, Michael Venter/Steven Howcroft 2.51.41, Don Rowston/David Warlters 2.52.27, Jeremy Spear 2.55.34 and Graham Willis 2.59.45.

The field was rounded out by Rob Grozier/Norman Berry 3.12.50, Nick Ridgwell 3.19.37, Justin Paine 3.21.54, Barbara Weber 3.29.40 and Jim Screen 3.32.16.

Right: Roger Aspinall appears to be seeking divine assistance before the Wisemans-Spencer paddle. Was he successful?

Trivia question: Who is the Lane Cove paddler pictured on the front cover of this year's Hawkesbury Classic race booklet? Answer: page 7.



Ian Purves, Julie Stanton, Justin Paine and Urs Mader wait for the bus from Spencer to Wisemans



Sam Sharbine tells Urs Mader how close he's going to washride him from Wisemans to Spencer



Battle of the divisions by Tim Hookins

It was a beautiful day for a battle at Wyong on August in [race 6](#) of the [Winter Marathon Series](#). Cool, not too much breeze and a clear sky. The race was characterised by lemming-like herds of paddlers clustering together in their divisions vying for those points.

The Wyong race is two laps from the start upstream, so it divides neatly into quarters. You can see easily how you are progressing (or fading) against the opposition. The middle pack of 4th division was overtaken by the front pack of 5th division before the last quarter and the finish was a frothy battle with many finishing within seconds of one another. A great tribute to the divisional system set

in place by Roger Aspinall, Julie Stanton, Liz van Rees and others.

This was the first event when LCRK members were able to wear the new uniforms and they were very distinctive and recognisable. They were also comfortable. I didn't even notice I was wearing mine.

As usual we had no one in div 1, but the fastest time of the day was

Another first for Rob Vallis in his Sonic

Stewart O'Regan of St George Club in 1:34:42. Our quickest time of the day was by Peter Geisbuhl in 1:43:32 in 5th position. Then came Richard Barnes 1:50:55, Thomas Reif 1:50:55 and then



in his first race for the club, welcoming our newest member was Kojic Llubisa in 2:09:22. I'm sure his times will improve dramatically.

Bruce Goodall was our representative in division 3 having boldly upped himself into this division. He posted a time of 1:47:14 which would actually put him in the top half of division 2!

Division 4 as usual was ours! Rob Vallis won it in his Sonic 1:50:20 closely followed by Margaret Cook and Merridy Huxley in 1:50:34 in the K2. In their opening shot Warren Huxley and Frank McDonald came 10th with 1:53:53 in the brand-new Supersonic. There will certainly be improvements there. Julie Stanton came in two seconds later in 1:53:55. Tim Hookins struggled in in a disappointing 13th spot in 1:57:14. Tom Simmat came in in 16th position in a time of 2:05:43, not at all helped by a semi-submerged tree which caused him to go for an unexpected and not so warm swim. For anyone else this would have been disastrous, but for Tom after the Yukon, the water temperature would have given him a pleasant surprise.

The rampant 5th division is completely out of control this year with 36 competitors, 9 of whom were from Lane Cove. 8 of those times were within the

middle range of the division 4 times! Our best were Tim McNamara and Derek Simmonds in the TK2 with the cow-catching bow in 5th place in 1:55:33, with Ian Purves next in an uncompromising 1:56:55 in his TK1. Ian softens up the opposition with loud friendly conversation as he overtakes.

Bert Lloyd and Trev Williamson put in their usual steady performance in the Mirage double with a 10th spot in 1:59:19. Neil and Deb Meade re-entered the fray with a time of 2:04:59. This is their first marathon in a while. James Mumme did a time of 2:08:47 coming in 19th, Rob Cook came 26th in 2:11:17, Nick Salom did a time of 2:24:53 and Greg Appleyard did 2:28:01.

As usual, John Greathead and Tony Walker were in the points in division 6 with a third place in 1:28:15 in the 15km course. John and Tony have greatly improved times in their new Maudrauder double and have been earning the respect of many recently. They have been noticed!



Sitting on the fence and catching up on the carbohydrates: Richard Barnes, Craig Dodd (Central Coast), Merridy Huxley and Marg Cook. At rear are Rob Cook (in hat) with Windsor legends Judy Greenidge and Jill Sowerby.

Gold! Gold! Gold!

It might have been the [Winter Marathon Series](#) but [race 7](#) on the Hacking River on September 23 was held on a day hot enough to have been mid summer. And for Lane Cove River Kayakers it was red hot. Three wins! First place in divisions 2, 3 and 4. It doesn't come much better than that in this competitive series. (We were lucky with the weather. 24 hours later ferocious 110km-an-hour winds smashed Sydney and would have made racing impossible.)

Matt Acheson started our ball rolling with a big victory in division 2. His time of 1.41.21 was almost a full minute clear of the next best, a double. Jason Wilson also had a strong paddle to finish 5th in 1.45.36, while ever-present Richard Barnes, flying the national flag from the rear of his K1, was 11th in 1.49.54



A DNF for Tim McNamara and Derek Simmonds

In division 3 the iridescent sparkling green Supersonic of Tim and Oliver Hookins snatched first place from Bruce Goodall and Christine Lalor (Windsor) by 4 seconds in a storming finish. The father-and-son combo had the outstanding time of 1.43.03. Lane Cove's only other competitor in this division, the newly purchased (pre-loved) K2 of Derek Simmonds and Tim McNamara set out with a borrowed seat but was forced to the sidelines after 12km because of a broken rudder pedal.

In division 4 Rob Vallis made it two in a row. He's in

sensational form. His charging Sonic came across the line in 1.55.22, 13 seconds clear of the next craft. Marg Cook and Merridy Huxley again showed their stern to a lot of male paddlers with 5th place in 1.57.42, followed closely by Matt Swann/James Mumme 7th in 1.57.48, Julie Stanton 9th in 1.58.49, Craig Elliott 11th in 1.58.54 and Annalisa McKay/Michael Meryment 18th in 2.06.15.

Our best in the armada which formed division 5 were Len Hedges 7th in 2.01.45, Bert Lloyd/Trevor Williamson 8th in 2.01.56 and Tom Simmat 10th in 2.04.00. Sam Sharbine was 14th in 2.04.58 and Simon Mann 19th 2.09.07. Battling along



Trevor Williamson, Tony Walker, John Greathead, Tim Hookins and Oliver Hookins just standing around

further back were Rob Grozier 33rd in 2.24.58, Justin Paine 35th in 2.40.03, and Greg Appleyard 36th in 2.40.29.

In the 15km division 6, John Greathead and Tony Walker piloted their double around in 1.31.04 to take 3rd spot.

Pleasure craft in their usual close (sometimes very close) proximity combined with an outgoing tide and occasional wind gusts to make for some interesting paddling conditions at times. It was a very pleasant outing, as usual for this series, and Roger Aspinall with his band of helpers and efficient paperless office again ensured a smooth organisation.

Move to the pontoon put on hold

by Tim Hookins, President

As did many other members, I found the debate on the future of the Club's location and facilities refreshing. The Committee now has to take these and other relevant facts on board and move forward. We have to map out what will be best for the Club over a span of ten or even twenty years ahead.

What are the options?

[We can stay as we are, at the ramp with BBQs at the pontoon.](#)

- We enjoy the ambiance and wilderness feel of Wirong Flat, especially at night.
- We have no legitimacy at the ramp. The Dept of Parks and Wildlife and Waterways would prefer we were not located there.
- Relations with the local owners at River Avenue are not good, with blow-ups occurring every year, justified or not.
- The ramp is not as safe as the launching facilities of any other club I can think of. A major concern of the Committee is the responsibility for the safety of the members. Should we use an unsafe ramp when a purpose-made facility is available just down the river?

[We can move immediately to the pontoon.](#)

- Willoughby Council is actively supporting us in this. In her most recent letter to us the Open Space Manager said: "Council is committed to our community having access to the widest possible range of recreation opportunities and we welcome your kayaking association to our Park."
- The pontoon facilities are there, but are not ideal for the Club.

Insurance cover

A welcome guest at the last LCRK Committee meeting was Mike Eggleton, Executive Officer of NSW Canoeing. He clarified a number of points of concern. One of these was that to have insurance cover, a paddler at any of our sanctioned club activities must be a paid-up member of a club affiliated to Australian Canoeing (which includes all clubs affiliated to State canoeing associations) and must abide by maritime regulations.

The Winter Marathon Series will be expanded from 8 to 10 races in 2007, with the first race at the new venue of Nelligen, on the Clyde River near Batemans Bay, on February 24. Points totals will be based on competitors' best 8 races. For details, see Paddlers' Diary, page 8.

- Parking facilities are there, but are not ideal for the Club.
- Toilet, storage, water, BBQ and covered area facilities are available.

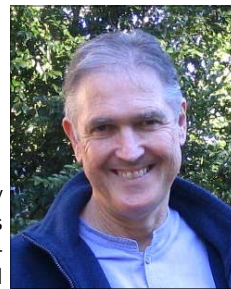
[We can make improvements to the pontoon area and move to the pontoon once the changes are in hand.](#)

- The Committee is in discussion with Council about attaching a new pontoon to the existing one. This would perhaps double the size of the pontoon area, providing 3 launching platforms and space for the timekeepers.
- The Committee will immediately buy a set of permanent aluminium steps for the existing launching platform, to be fixed by Willoughby Council.
- The Committee is immediately putting in hand the construction of a new removable launching platform on the bollard side of the pontoon for testing purposes to ease the congestion of the pontoon at launching and returning time. The intention is to provide continuous launching platforms as close to the water level as practical and ultimately to have a better kayak launching area than we now have at the ramp.
- We are considering installing removable rollers at the end of the pontoon for the launching of heavier craft.

- Willoughby Council has already confirmed they will give us a lockable storage area in the pontoon building for our equipment.

Once the work in the Epping Road tunnel is complete the area under the trees currently used for parking will revert to grassed areas and the area currently around the shed will become a large parking area. It is the intention of the Committee to have a design input into the layout of the parking including space for vehicles with trailers and to improve grassed areas near to the parking. The actual carrying distance from the water to the parking is very similar to what we currently have.

The ultimate focus of the Committee in this issue is to give the Club a pathway leading to ideal facilities in the long term. You can gather from the above that your Committee is actively adopting measures to create this pathway. We have decided to postpone a permanent move to the pontoon to test the various proposals now in hand and to negotiate with the authorities who have interests in the pontoon area. This will take time and represents a big workload to your Committee. We ask for your support in this transition to the pontoon.



Bled-dy expensive kayaking by Tony Carr

Who says kayaking doesn't get in the blood ... or in this case is it in the Bled?

I recently returned from two months in Russia and Eastern Europe. A great trip, but a long time off the water.

While in Slovenia, that tiny country to the right of Austria, I jumped at the opportunity to paddle on Lake Bled which is famous in kayaking circles for its 2000m international race course. It's also one of Europe's most photographed waterways – its centrepiece a little church on a small island in the middle of this glacial lake surrounded by high mountains.

I wobbled down the lake in a tiny Prijon designed for white water and was cheered by the only two people in the grandstand at the end of the course – who turned out to be my neighbours from Duffys Forest. I didn't know they were travelling and they didn't know my wife and I were overseas!

I have some advice for anyone wishing to follow my example and paddle Lake Bled:

Don't hire your boat from a company called Lifetrek. The substandard Prijon was quoted at \$30 for an hour when booked on the phone. It became \$50 an hour on arrival.

And later, I discovered, the very same red shocker could be hired for \$10 an hour directly from the little shop on the lake. I reckon the hire outfit should be renamed Lifetrick!



The renowned Avon Descent (rhymes with have-on, not hay-von) in WA is a 134km time trial for paddle craft and power dinghies on the Avon and Swan Rivers. Day 1 is 58km, starting at Northam and going downriver into the Darling Range escarpment. Day 2 is 76km and contains the major whitewater obstacles and challenges. The final 30km of flat water finishes at Bayswater, Perth.

Bang, crash — it's the Avon Descent by Matt Blundell

Prayers and more prayers seemed to have fallen on deaf ears as I prepared to head over to Perth for the 2006 Avon Descent 2-day kayak race. What are you praying for, you ask? "RAIN". Just a little rain, well a lot in fact, to get the river level up to a paddleable level. Flights booked to leave on Wednesday 2nd August. Just in time my new kayak CX Lancer K1 turns up from South Africa, big thanks to Dean Gardiner for arranging it for me. A quick paddle and the boat feels good. Time to put it back in its wrapper.

You always get funny looks when you turn up to the airport with a 5-metre-long silver bag under one arm. And the looks keep coming from the check-in staff as well, but a big smile goes a long way. Some quick phone calls from the check-in girl and she informs me that it will fit on the plane, which I already know, having called in advance. I arrive in Perth and am met by my trusty support crew, Tom. Not your average support crew but a 6ft 7in mountain of a man who has a knack of getting prime parking spots!

A day of relaxing doing last-minute bits and bobs. Friday will be scrutineering. Kato (Dean Wayne) calls to say he's arrived from Sydney and will pick me up in 10mins. It's off down to Mandurah to pick up Kato's 20kg+ Ocean Sprinter plastic sit-on-top ski. We load it on the car, it takes two of us. "Man, it's heavy". Glad I'm in the 9.5kg K1, but then a little birdie says plastic doesn't get holes in it. More prayers, "still no RAIN". Off to Northam, the start of the race, for registration and scrutineering. Formalities done, it's back to Fremantle for a good nights sleep and more prayers.

BEEP BEEP BEEP, it's 5.30am, time to rise and shine. 5.45am, a knock at the door and Tom's here, off to Northam. We do a quick stop to pick up another Avon Descent groupie, Lucy, and we are on our way. I doze in the car, flashbacks of last year when the rudder fell off after 1km of the race bring me wide awake, no time to snooze. At Northam it's all action, people and boats everywhere, all the power boat racers are getting one last fag in before race start.

I hear a loud BEEP and a roar of engines — the power dinghies are off two at a time. 49min 30sec till my start time.

Time flies and before I know it I'm on the start line and the 5-second countdown has begun. 5... 4... 3... 2... BEEP! I sprint off the start. After 500m the first obstacle: Northam Weir. I notice 8-9 people portaging so decide to follow suit, meanwhile the South Africans have both shot the weir and take the lead which they hold till the end of day one. After a quick portage I am slowly making my way past some of the earlier starters. Oops, wrong line, and I run aground, all the good work undone. Slowly I regain the ground I have just lost, only to lose bits every



now and again in the 0.31m water, the lowest for the full race on record. Weighing in at 73kg is an advantage I soon realise as I pass much bigger competitors who must weigh in at over 90kg as they run aground more often while I scoot past. After 2hrs I have caught and passed both Kiwi Team rep members. Looks like they aren't enjoying the conditions, same for everyone.

Day one is a series of little channels which all becomes a guessing game as to which have enough water, and for the others it's a quick unscheduled portage, but it's all good fun as it seems everyone's in the same boat. The next obstacle is Extracts Weir which used to have a series of plastic pipes you could slide down with care. A big crowd has turned up to see some carnage. Pipes now gone, it's another portage — no carnage today! Day one has just one rapid worth a mention, Toodyay Rapid, and as I approach I consider another portage but the K2, ski and K1 paddler I am with all say they are going for it. No problems, then oops!!! Wrong line, stuck in the middle, one leg out and I'm off again.

One challenge remaining: the ti trees. I have just caught a paddler with 5 Avon Descent stickers on his helmet.

Just the paddler I need to follow through the ti trees, it is Darryl Long, an Avon Legend I find out later. He was taking some good lines, but I was feeling good and went for the pass. Wrong move, high and dry on a log and it's goodbye Darryl! Soon after this my lack of Powerbar drink took its toll and I was struggling. Half an hour of battling and the finish of day one arrives. 6th place in my class, a vast improvement on last year but the challenge really starts on day 2.

BEEP BEEP BEEP 4.35am, time to rise and shine. Once again Tom's on time. 4.45am we head from Fremantle to the start of day 2 at Boral campsite where the majority of the racers have camped overnight. One minute after the first start I'm off along with Darryl Long, two K2s and some dude on a Spirit plastic ski in a team. It's a mad dash off the line, "do they realise we have a very long day ahead?" More ti trees and more fallen trees over the river which means lots of mini portages. Before long another wrong channel sees the group pull away, no worries, still plenty of time. After 8km of paddling we come to Emu Falls, one of the race's major rapids and with the low water level and advice from other paddlers it's a portage for me, no path though, so it's rock-hopping with the kayak through the bush, soon back in and racing.

After Emu Falls I see a small crowd on the side of the river, I should have realised by now crowd equals action equals rapid. Too late, I'm high and dry on a small weir/drop off, a quick push with the hands, bang crash, boat flexing and I'm paddling again, the good news is no one's passing me, I can't even see anyone behind. Lots of small-medium rapids lead to the next major rapid, Syds, rescue personnel are my first warning and a paddler standing up half way down emptying a kayak, I pull over and portage.

Lots more small rapids lead to the last major rapid, Bells. I was thinking of another portage, having chased and caught a K2, but they inform me they are going over Bells and as my support crew Tom and Lucy are waiting I go for it. The K2 goes left, I go right, no problem. Some more weaving through the rapids, I spot Tom: water and Power Gels, yip-pee! I love my Power Gel. A 2min stop and I'm off chasing the K2. 30km to go

and feeling good. I know I will finish and then a little rapid. Bang crash, I stop dead, jump out, jump back in. The nose has some damage but it's above the water line so it's fine. I soon settle into a good rhythm and start to catch the K2, again then I hear a splash and a relay team member on a single ski comes



whizzing past. I jump on the wash and in no time we catch and pass the K2. Then a tight spot in some trees, I get jammed in, then slammed by the K2. In I go, the river is only 3 metres wide but too deep to touch the bottom. Off goes my water bladder, floating downriver.

A couple of minutes getting the boat emptied and I'm fired up off after the K2 again, momentary pause to pick up my nalgene water bladder, too far to go without water. 15 min later I catch the K2 but feeling great and them squabbling with each other I blow right past in pursuit of the second-placed K2. I catch sight of them in the distance and give it everything to catch up. And as luck would have it I find their wash just as we reach the deeper water of the Swan River and the pace goes up by a couple of km an hour. A great wash sees us pull in the relay team member on the ski who had flown past earlier and the leading female. We are soon all on the K2's wash going strong. We reach the last team changeover, 14.5km to go. Abbey Miedema, the leading female by a mile, drops off here and we leave the team behind as they change over.

Starting to tire a bit but the sight of a ski and a K1 in the distance keeps me going. A couple of surges from the K2, we soon catch the ski and Darryl Long in the K1. The pace stays high and after 500m we drop Darryl, now can we (I) put the 1min 45sec needed into Darryl to gain 5th spot. The answer is yes, we all take a lead or two on the way to the finish line. We reach the finish 7 hours plus on the second day for a total time for me of 12hrs 2min 16sec and 5th place K1. But more importantly I finish my first Avon Descent.

For the record: K1 – 1st Sven Bruss, 2nd Daryl Bartho, 3rd Simon Roll.

Next issue: "Ching ching ching echoed through the valley as my rudder smashed over hidden rocks." Dean Wayne describes his descent of the Avon.

Frank and Marg in the Kimberleys

This year's Kimberley trip took us through 5 states covering 12,000km. The dearest fuel was \$2.25 a litre and with our fuel tank capacity of 180 litres, it sure hurt to fill up. The average daily temperature in the Kimberleys was a very pleasant 32 degrees, so it was a bit of a shock to come home to 12 degrees.

Our first stop on leaving Sydney was Lightning Ridge where a friend has an opal mine. I couldn't get too excited about spending my spare time 10 metres underground, digging all day for very little reward, but we learnt lot.

From there, we traveled through Cunnamulla, Thargomindah and on to Innamincka and Cooper Creek, which was quite full of water owing to the cyclone in North Queensland earlier in the year. Great paddling in the Cooper with the abundant birdlife and very historic area, like the Burke and Wills Dig Tree. We carried on out to Coongie Lakes, about 100km north west of Innamincka.

It has been 10 years since we've been to Coongie and we spent 4 days out there on our own, paddling the lakes system among thousands of birds of all varieties, pristine waterways, dingoes and brumbies and the sand dunes come right to the water's edge. Sunsets here rate the best of anywhere we've been.

On to Birdsville via the Walkers Crossing Track, through the Strezlecki Desert (you don't want to break down there), then we picked up the Birdsville Track 100km south of Birdsville. We had the obligatory drink and meal at the Birdsville Pub (they are still talking about Roger Deane) and then took the Landcruiser up Big Red, the tallest sand dune in the Simpson Desert.

We drove from Birdsville in Queensland to Kununurra in WA with only a short detour into the Camooweal Caves. While driving along the dirt surfaced Buchanan Highway, we encountered our third flat tyre for the day – just great when we only had 2 spares. I had to push the tyre 10km uphill and into the wind to Top Springs to get some more tyre plugs.

Our real adventure began on the Gibb River Road in WA, up to Kalumburu

then on out to Honeymoon Bay on the coast of Napier Broome Bay between Wyndham and Derby. We camped on the beach here for 3 weeks, with plenty of fishing and paddling and exploring the coastline – white beaches, red cliffs, sea eagles, Brahminy kites, Gouldian finches, sea turtles, dugongs, sharks and crocodiles. The Aborigines speared a dugong while we were there and that is not a pretty sight.

We left our camper at Honeymoon Bay and went out in the Landcruiser for a week just with our little tent, firstly to the Drysdale River National Park for some great bushwalking and climbing, then we crossed over the Drysdale River and followed the abandoned Striker Diamond Mine track to the King George River. We camped by the pristine King George River, then backpacked out to the King George Falls using just the GPS with the head of the falls as our go-to point. Seeing these falls would have to be the highlight of this year's trip.

After checking out the old Striker Diamond Mine site, we then headed back to Honeymoon Bay, hitched up the camper again and set out for home. We only had 5 days to drive the 5,500km back to Sydney and had rain and cold weather from Alice Springs to home. If only Marg would retire, we would still be up there!



Above: 10km to go! **Below:** Marg and Frank with the rig at Coongie Lakes, where they paddled with thousands of birds of all types



The new Nanuq - lighter and faster

Rob Grozier has started work on his new Nanuq traditional Greenland kayak. Made from western red cedar, he reckons it will weigh only 13 or 14 kg.

He says the original, built to design instructions from pine, is



Rob has bought a specially made traditional Greenland paddle for his Nanuq. Made from western red cedar, it is much narrower than standard paddles and has no feather. He says it's beautiful to paddle with.

strong enough to withstand the Arctic Sea or carry a harpooned seal. "Due to the current shortage of seals in Lane Cove River, I'm going for something lighter and faster this time," he says.

Cancelled races

Heavy rain and strong winds forced cancellation of this year's Myall River Classic, for the second year in a row. Michael Venter, who went up and tested the water out anyhow, said quite a few people braved the conditions and had a paddle.

The bad weather also prevented the Gloucester Mountain Man from being raced. Richard Barnes brushed off the threat of disappearing from view in a submerged pothole on the bike leg to do the course anyhow and said the rain helped by converting part of the kayak leg from portage in a rocky river bed to mild rapids.

Multifaceted Richard also raced his 24th City-to-Surf in August, his time of 53.34 for the 14km event again qualifying him for a front spot at race start with the faster runners next year.

Woronora Zig Zag

A small band of Lane Cove paddlers turned out for the 26th Twin Rivers Classic, run by Sutherland Shire Canoe Club, on the Woronora River on August 6.

A strong wind and an outgoing tide, both coming from the south, turned the 2-lap race into a contest of four quarters - 1st and 3rd easier, 2nd and 4th hard. And you had to zig and zag across the river at just the right times to avoid the very broad sand banks.

Richard Barnes had an impressive 2.00.16 for the 23km event. Tim McNamara and Derek Simmonds, reunited as a double combination, had a fine 2.06.09, while the tried and true team of Bert Lloyd and Trevor Williamson took 2.14.43. Justin Paine had a 2.57.50.

24-Hour Challenge

Feel like a challenge with a difference? Race against teams from all over Australia? Get together with some of your mates and enter a Lane Cove team in the National 24-Hour Relay Challenge. You race as many 5km laps on your home water as you can, with the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic handicapping system used to compare classes.

Teams of 6 boats, with a change of boat each lap. Greatest distance paddled wins. It's a chance not only for a bit of a hit-out but a lot of fun, perhaps a BBQ. And you'll need a strong team spirit to support each other as the night wears on.

Starts 10am Saturday November 25, ends 10am Sunday November 26. If you're prepared to rise to the challenge, see Tim Hookins.

Circumnavigating Tassie

Phil Newman and Richard Barnes are planning to paddle around Tasmania next March/April and expect the adventure to take around 40 days. They will be self-supporting, without accompanying craft. One problem in what will be a tough trip may be finding a place to land and camp each afternoon, specially on the rugged west coast. We'll bring you more details in future issues.

Who is the paddler?

Answer to trivia question on page 2: Deane Wayne, 408 (he won the open MRec).

New LCRK website operational

The "scaffolding" for the new website is up and operational. Over the next few weeks various pages will be completed, including email order forms for club clothing.

The photo gallery will contain downloadable photos. The Members Area will include Wednesday night times and various discussion forums. For information on how to register click on Members Area or go to <http://lcrk.org.au/help.php> or email admin@lcrk.org.au.

NEW CLUB CLOTHING

Lyra Race Singlets L, XL	\$55.00
Lyra Long Sleeved Rash L, XL	\$70.00
Caps - Blue, Red, Cream	\$17.00
Quality fleece full zip jackets (great for the Hawkesbury) - Red & Blue	\$50.00

Photos of these items and other clothing such as T-shirts and jumpers are on the merchandising page of our new website, www.lcrk.org.au.

Orders can be emailed to d.simmonds@uws.edu.au, items delivered COD Wednesday nights.

The new website order form will be completed soon.

Timekeeping roster

Oct 18	Neil and Deb Meade
Oct 25	Frank and Marg McDonald
Nov 1	No paddle (post Classic BBQ)
Nov 8	Chris Kent, Len Hedges
Nov 15	Tony Carr, Robert Grozier
Nov 22	Doug Taylor, Murray Oakley
Nov 29	Julie Stanton, Roger Aspinall
Dec 6	Nick Chai, Ian Purves
Dec 13	Craig Elliott, Richard Barnes
Dec 20	Justin Paine, Tony Walker (BBQ)
Dec 27	No paddle
Jan 3	Wade and Miles Rowston
Jan 10	Rob Vallis, Graeme Jeffries
Jan 17	James Farrell, Glen Orchard
Jan 24	Jeff Bannerman, Ian Hofstetter
Jan 31	Graham Willis, James Mumme

If you cannot make it for your turn, advise Rob Vallis (0428-526-018) ASAP or arrange a swap with someone else. It is recommended that if you are rostered on still come prepared to paddle (if that is your wish) as sometimes others who are not paddling are happy to assist with timekeeping.

If you paddle in our Wednesday night time trials, please read this carefully.

Lost paddler search procedure

The following procedure is to be implemented in the event of a paddler being overdue during a Wednesday night time trial.

A paddler is deemed to be overdue if he/she has not returned to the start/finish point, or has not notified the timekeepers of his/her intention to return, by 8.15pm.

The Club President shall be the person responsible for controlling the search. If the President is unavailable, the hierarchy shall be the Wednesday night coordinator, then the rostered timekeeper.

A rescue kit, packed in a dry-bag and comprising the following items, shall be available for search teams: first aid kit, torch, mobile phone holder, map, emergency blanket, tape and tow-line, whistle, copy of procedure.

Procedure

1. A search party comprising 2 teams of at least 2 boats per team shall be appointed.
2. The last known whereabouts of the missing paddler shall be determined if possible. The search plan can be modified based on information available about the paddler's last known position.
3. One team shall be nominated as the "downstream team" and shall search from the launching ramp to Figtree Bridge and return.
4. The other team shall be nominated as the "upstream team"

and shall search from the launching ramp to Fullers Bridge and return.

5. The downstream team shall be provided with the rescue kit.
6. Each team is to carry a mobile phone and at least 1 torch per boat. The search controller shall also have a mobile phone and the relevant numbers shall be exchanged between the teams and controller. The controller shall have a list of emergency phone numbers, eg Water Police, Ambulance, etc.
7. Search teams shall depart at the instruction of the controller.
8. The upstream team shall continue downstream when the upstream leg has been satisfactorily searched. The intention here is to meet the downstream team on their return from Figtree Bridge.
9. The controller shall decide the frequency of communication required. For example, get the teams to report back when they have reached certain landmarks.
10. If the paddler is located, the controller is to be immediately notified of the paddler's condition and what steps are to be implemented to get the paddler back to the launching ramp.
11. If the paddler needs medical attention, the Police and Ambulance are to be called immediately, and the search party is to remain with the paddler.
12. If both teams return to the launching ramp without the missing paddler, the controller shall immediately notify the authorities and all persons shall remain at the launching ramp.

LCRK Committee
PO Box 163 Lane Cove 1595
lcrkms@optusnet.com.au

President: Timothy Hookins

Vice-President: Derek Simmonds

Secretary: James Mumme

Treasurer: Nick Chai

Membership Secretary: Matt Swann

Wednesday Night Convenor: Rob Vallis

Waterways Rep: Robert Grozier

Classic & Marathon Coordinator: Graeme Jeffries

Clothing Coordinator: Don Rowston

Kayak Kapers Editor: Justin Paine ph 9858-3323

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PADDLERS' DIARY

October 14	HCC Familiarisation (Night) Sackville-Windsor	www.canoeclassic.asn.au
October 28-29	Hawkesbury Canoe Classic	www.canoeclassic.asn.au
November 5	200m Paddle Festival	9971-8389
November 11	WMS 8 Wagga	www.waggabidgee.com.au
December 27-31	Murray Marathon	www.redcross.org.au
February 24	WMS 1 Nelligen	0418-970-751
March 10	WMS 2 Canberra	6254-7162, 0418-861-613
April 21 or 22	WMS 3 Narrabeen	9971-8389
May 19 or 20	WMS 4 Berry	4285-2595, 4262-5343
June 17	WMS 5 Wallamba Challenge	6554-7660, 6554-8287
July 14 or 15	WMS 6 Windsor	4579-9202, 0410-775-360
August 19	WMS 7 Wyong	4353-1556, 4329-2882
September 15 or 16	WMS 8 Hacking Marathon	9531-5460
October 13 or 14	WMS 9 Lane Cove	9907-6074
November 10 or 11	WMS 10 Wagga Wagga	6971-1168, 0427-102-707