



KAYAK KAPERS

October 2010

Frank McDonald 1942-2010

Lane Cove River Kayakers has lost one of its staunchest and most popular members, Frank McDonald. After a courageous 17-month battle against lung cancer, Frank died peacefully in Manly Hospital on Sunday, Sept 5. He was 68.

Although he knew his condition was terminal, Frank fought to make the most of the time remaining after his illness was diagnosed in Darwin early in 2009. He turned up at a number of Marathon 10 series races to watch his clubmates compete and also made it to several monthly BBQs.

He looked forward eagerly to regular visits from a number of friends, often wandering with them down to Manly for a coffee or lunch. His appetite for club news was never quenched and he was inquiring about LCRK activities right up to the end.

Earlier this year Frank and wife Marg, both inveterate campers, took off on a 2-month tour of Tasmania, during which they were on hand to farewell a band of Lane Cove and other paddlers setting off on a paddle across Bass Strait.

One of his most amazing achievements was in the 2008 Hawkesbury Classic, only three months or so before it was discovered he had lung cancer. Paddling with Ian Cooper in a Supersonic borrowed from Tim Hookins, he arrived at Wisemans looking, as Tony Hystek put it, "very second hand, indeed physically sick". But after a quick revive, he was back in the boat and they completed the race in the very fast time of 9 hrs 47 mins 18 secs.

Family members and other speakers at his funeral on Sept 13 reminisced about many fond moments with him, and a stream of anecdotes recalled not only his good sense of fun and humour but also that he was a bit of a rascal at times. Warren Huxley described him as a fantastic listener with an insatiable curiosity who was "welcoming, companionable, always there and just great company".

While a funeral brings sadness, this was also an occasion to remember happy times and celebrate a life of vigour, achievement and love.

About 30 Lane Cove members with paddles formed a guard of honour as his casket, with his white LCRK cap on top, was taken into the chapel at Macquarie Park. The pallbearers were his sons



Ross, Stephen and Daniel and his long time paddling partner, Ian Cooper.

There was a large gathering, including many paddlers from other clubs, to say goodbye. As Lane Cove President Matt Swann noted, "it was a good send off."

His ashes will be scattered in Back Creek at South West Rocks, a favourite holiday spot for the Travelling Macs.

Lane Cove River Kayakers extends heartfelt sympathy to Marg and family.

Ian Cooper paid tribute to Frank as a friend and doubles partner who will be greatly missed. They bought a TK2 together to do the 2003 Murray Marathon.

"We found we worked well together in the boat and over the ensuing years we paddled together in marathon series, often with some success," he said. "We had a second crack at the Hawkesbury Classic in 2008 which was completed in

9h 47m. It was not a record but still a bloody good time and we were pleased with ourselves. When his illness was diagnosed in Darwin Frank phoned me to say 'Gee mate, I reckon we could have broken the record in the Classic if I'd had two lungs working'. It's hard to imagine Frank could train and perform at such a high level when he was in the early stages of this disease.

"Rest in peace, Frank."

Tom Simmat remembered his time with Frank during his first Murray Marathon. "We camped with him that trip, he always knew the best and coolest spot to be, and was so genuine with his comradeship. In the few years I have known him we grew to be great friends," he said.

Marg Cook tells about how she and Merridy Huxley were paddling their first Murray Marathon together in 2003, as were Frank and Ian.

*When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me
I want no rites in a gloom filled room
Why cry for a soul set free?*

*Miss me a little – but not too long
And not with your head bowed low
Remember the love that once we shared
Miss Me – But Let Me Go*

(Poem from Frank's funeral program)

"Late during day one or two, Merridy saw Frank and Ian enjoying a leisurely lunch on the riverbank. She yelled, in her best voice, 'get off your arse Frank and get on the water' (or words to that effect) as we paddled past. That got them moving and became the start of a great friendship," she said.

"We learnt much about Frank's 'can do' attitude and also of his generosity of spirit. He welcomed all paddlers as friends and was always happy to include new people in his circle. He had a knack of getting the most shy and awkward

people to feel relaxed and belonging – a rare and valuable skill.”

Frank met Tony Hystek for the first time during a Hawkesbury Classic familiarisation paddle from Sackville to Wisemans and persuaded him to join Lane Cove club. One of Tony’s special memories is of the time he and Frank paddled a Supersonic in a sub-60 Wednesday night time trial, the fastest Frank had ever been in a kayak. “You should have seen the look of pleasure after we did his quickest-ever lap,” Tony said. “This must have been close to the time he found out the bad news. I only knew Frank for a short time, but it’s the longest I’ve ever known anyone in Lane Cove. I’ll miss him.”

Derek Simmonds said Frank will be remembered as a passionate sportsman and adventurer who lived and loved life

to the max and generously supported others in their pursuits.

“He was a loyal and enthusiastic supporter of all LCRK paddlers who gave it a go, from the regular Wednesday night punters to the few who extended themselves massively to the limits of human endurance,” he said. “His rare spirit of generosity, encouragement, fun and loyalty will be sadly missed down at the river.”

Derek also noted that before he took up paddling Frank was an A grade tennis player, Australian championship level squash player and BMW Alpina rally driver.

Tim Hookins and his business partner, Bill Handley, frequently had morning coffee at the Bellaroma with Frank.

“We were lucky to have arranged a meeting just a week before Frank landed up in hospital,” he said. “Tom Simmat, Bill and I went with Frank for a coffee in Manly. Frank was really keen to hear how Tom had got on up the Yukon and how I had bashed my boat around going down the Avon. We really didn’t think that would be the last time we would see him, because he still seemed like the same old Frank. And that’s how we will remember him.

“Good, kindly, Frank.”

A Tribute Page to Frank has been established on the LCRK website, www.lcrk.org.au. If you would like to add a tribute to this page, email it to amathers@energy.com.au marked “Tribute to Frank McDonald”.



Can we win back the Commonwealth Bank Cup?

The question on everyone's lips is can Lane Cove win back the Hawkesbury Classic trophy for the premier club, the Commonwealth Bank Cup?

After 6 straight winning years, we lost it in 2009 when we entered, by our standards, only a small field.

This year we are back to something like our usual complement of 30-plus boats, and there is plenty of quality on show. Classic strategy specialist Graeme Jeffries reckons to win we need bonus points from about four record breakers and as many again finishing within an hour of the record.

If you look through the list of potential starters a number are capable of scoring these bonus points. And don't forget the rest of the paddlers who also score valuable points.

Everyone who races, including Brooklyn or Bust, scores points. You get a point for every kilometre covered plus 50 for finishing, ie 111 + 50 = 161. Plus

Expected LCRK field for the Classic

Richard Barnes	M 40+ SRec	Playboat
Matt Blundell	M O K1	Epic
Andrew Benoit	BB1	Greenlander
Tony Carr	M 60+ LRec	Challenger
Nigel Colless	M 40+ MRec	Mirage 530
Marg Cook/ Rob Cook/ Merridy Huxley/ Warren Huxley	X 50+ K4	
Jason Cooper/ Bob Turner	M O LRec2	SLR2
Trevor Distin	M 50+ UN1	Epic V12
Tim Dodd	M 40+ MRec	Flash
Bill Donohue	BB1	Mirage 580
Craig Ellis/ Scott Gilbert	M 40+ UN2	Supersonic
James Farrell	M O LRec	Hzn Tourer
Toby Hogbin	M O MRec	Epic 18
Tom Holloway	BB1	Burn
Tim Hookins	M 60+ MRec	Flash
Tony Hystek	M 50+ UN1	Rocket
Duncan Johnstone	M 50+ LRec	Renegade
Andrew Kucyper	BB1	Mirage 580
Richard Lindsay	BB1	Challenger
Andrew Mathers	M 40+ SSki	
Tim McNamara	M 60+ UN1	Sonic
Cathy Miller	X 50+ LRec2	
James Mumme	M 50+ UN1	Epic V10
Bettina Otterbeck	BB1	Hzn Scoutt
David Page	M 40+ LRec	Mirage 580
Justin Paine	M 60+ MRec	Flash
Don Rowston/ Bert Lloyd	M 60+ LRec2	Vulcan
Steve Russell	M O UN1	Epic V10
Tom Simmat	M 60+ SRec	The Cow
Derek Simmonds	M 60+ LRec	Flyer
Justin Stanbridge	BB1	Challenger
Matt Swann/ David Bloomfield	M 50+ UN2	Vindicator
James Terpening	M O SRec	Playboat
John Thearle	M 40+ UN1	Sonic
Elke van Ewyk	BB1	Sea Urchin
Kyle Wilson	M O LRec	Flyer

50 for breaking a competitive class record and 25 for finishing within an hour of the record. In assessing a club total, the highest scoring 10 boats score full points and the remainder contribute 10% of their individual score.

The Armidale School (TAS), who won last year, will again produce a formidable team and there will be tough competition also from NSW Sea Kayakers, Central Coast and Windsor.

Forecast weather is for conditions that will suit the faster boats and could produce a host of records. The moon will

be up all night, to the relief of all. Most competitors will have the assistance of an outgoing tide for perhaps half way to Sackville, then punch an incoming tide most of the way to Wisemans, where high tide will be at 11.09pm. Then a fast run-out tide to Brooklyn where low tide will be at 3.15am.

If you aren't competing, be part of the Lane Cove support team and join in the club spirit. We still have paddlers needing landcrew, so please volunteer. For newer members, this is a great way to gain experience of the Classic.

Tony and John go for full beauty treatment

Mud, mud, glorious mud! Tony Walker and John Greathead found plenty of it on their way to Wisemans Ferry from Sackville in the Classic fami on Sept 4.

Rounding a right hand bend about half through the event, they somehow managed to capsize their newly acquired SLR2. It was only their fourth time out, maybe they need more exposure to it. (The SLR2 is now for sale!)

The Hawkesbury is quite wide at this point, and of course they came out on the outside of the bend under a cliff where the current was flowing strongest.

John emerged first, but there was no sign of Tony – he was upside down under the boat, locked firmly in his cockpit by his skirt. After some anxious moments he was able to fumble his way free and splutter to the surface.

Fortunately a passing speedboat, one of few encountered during the famil, stopped and towed them across to the shallows on the inside of the bend. Unfortunately he dropped them on a mud bank, and they sank up to their hips in the messy stuff.

"We were actually doing breaststroke across the mud trying to get to the bank," John said. "Eventually we had to swim back out and along to a sandbank."

Legendary Windsor pair Jill Sowerby and Judy Greenidge came to their aid and took



Tony Walker (left) after his mud beauty therapy on the Hawkesbury River, and (right) with fellow swimmer John Greathead after a cleanup. Peeking from behind is Bathurst good samaritan Rob Lee who was one of those who stopped to help.

these pictures. In a cheeky comment later they said: "If mud is the beauty therapy it is reported to be, then best check out their legs in the coming weeks."

LCRK times and placings from the last two famils were :

Wisemans-Spencer: Tony Hystek 2.00.09 1, Jason Cooper 2.05.12 6, Wayne Wanders 2.18.48 12, Michael O'Keefe 2.18.58 13, Nigel Colless 2.19.21 14, Tony Carr 2.19.54 15, Nev Bradshaw/Lisa Healey 2.29.02 23, Richard Lindsay 2.29.05 24, Andrew Kucyper 2.29.27 26, Duncan Johnstone 2.31.43 29, Bill Donohoe 2.36.36 33, Bettina Otterbeck 3.01.27 37, Elke van Ewyk 3.10.52 38.

Sackville-Wisemans: Tony Hystek 2.33.55 1, Jason Cooper/Bob Turner 2.38.05 2, Michael Mueller 2.40.05 3, Tom Simmat 2.45.40 4, Trevor Distin 2.46.10 6, Craig Ellis/Scott Gilbert 2.46.44 7, Tim Hookins 2.50.57 10, Duncan Johnstone 3.07.34 =13, Don Rowston/Bert Lloyd 3.07.34 =13, Nigel Colless 2.13.56 17, Andrew Kucyper 3.21.06 21, Andrew Benoit 3.29.52 24, Bill Donohoe 3.30.51 26, John Greathead/Tony Walker 3.41.59 29, Justin Paine 3.48.45 34.

In late July, Tom Simmat and Steve Pizzey teamed up for the longest kayak/canoe race in the world, the Yukon 1000. This 1000-mile (1600km) race is through such desolate country in north America near the Arctic Circle that detailed maps do not exist. Wild animals like bear and moose pose a constant danger — in the water as well as on land. Despite being the first competitors ever to do the race in single kayaks, they won.

Yukon 1000: World's longest race

by Tom Simmat



Kobi was supposed to leave 30 spoons on the pontoon at Carmacs, or at least a note that said if you need a spoon contact 04256987etc. Kobi with his wife Fiona, my wife Christine, Steve's wife Pip and her father Linton formed our landcrew.

The Yukon 1000 rules permit assistance to competitors if that assistance is available equally for all competitors. We sighted Kobi and Fiona, high up on a cliff where the Campbell Highway had been cut in and I was able to talk to them on our tiny hand-held two-way radios.

It was late on the second day, just after Little Salmon Village, a couple of hours before Carmacs. My principal food source was freeze dried Mountain House meals, fantastic food except the chicken breast in mushroom gravy. To prepare I just tore off the top of the packet, unzipped inside, poured in boiling water, reziped and left for 10 minutes. To eat all I needed was a spoon.

Tucked in under the deck of my Horizon Flyer, just above my feet I had installed a net for all the things that I needed to be kept dry. Like a small first aid kit, the two-way radio, spare batteries, spare GPS and my spoon. The trouble was this was one of those mysterious places, like pockets in the car, that swallows things when you most need them, and to eat my first night's meal and hot granola breakfast in the kayak, I had to borrow Steve's spoon.

So over the two-way I asked Kobi if he could borrow or buy 30 odd spoons. One for every one in the race.

Having acquired a spoon, the second night Steve found a rather run down cabin to sleep in and it was that night that out of the foredeck hatch I pulled the chicken breast in mushroom gravy.

I mistook the chicken breast for croissants and ate them before I poured the hot water into the packet. That night it bucketed down on to the earth sod roof and while I was trying to get some sleep ironically I suffered from severe dehydration and was very crook at 5am when it was time to get back into the kayaks.

Carmacs is only 300 kilometres into The Yukon 1000 (1600km), the world's longest canoe and kayak race. The race starts in Whitehorse in central North West Canada and travels north down the Yukon River, across the Canadian Alaskan border near Eagle, and finishes in central Alaska several hundred miles from anywhere, where the Dalton Highway crosses the Yukon, the only possible take out point for more than 500 kilometres.

The race rules and compulsory equipment take into account that the race travels through some of the most remote and rugged country in the world.

We were required to carry bear spray to fend off a bear attack, and carried satellite Spot tracking devices that located our exact position every 10 minutes. These devices let the race controller monitor the compulsory stop each night, ensuring we restarted in the morning in the exact same place with no less than the 6-hour interval.

Although this year the Yukon was running very low and therefore disappointingly much slower, it still ran at up to 12km per hour, so maximising our time on the river in the current we saw as a key to being competitive. We tried to keep our stops strictly to the 6 hours.



Tom gets his treasured spoon at the Carmacs pontoon

This was the first time this race had been attempted in solo kayaks and for additional safety we had to race in pairs. Steve Pizzey was my solo buddy. We had both previously done the 760km Yukon River Quest (another compulsory requirement). The rest of the contestants this year were in double kayaks or canoes plus one Voyager class with 6 paddlers on board.

One of the canoes included another Australian team of Rod Spinks and Greg Lennox, outrigger canoe paddlers from Queensland.

As public cabins by the river were available to all competitors, when we timed it right we stayed in them. At Eagle there was a B and B, clearly available to all competitors, which we had stayed in on a previous trip. From Dawson and all that day we put in a very hard 18-hour



Coffee at Dawson, one of only two points in 1600km providing landcrew access



paddle to cross the border from Canada into USA Alaska and clear the Eagle customs in our 6-hour break.

More rain and some, it was a cow of a night, the low river had exposed a muddy slippery bank, and we struggled in the half light, with our gear, up a bent steel ladder to the front of the B and B. The 3-storey log building, now standing some 8 metres above the river level, had been pushed off its foundations when the river ice broke up the previous spring. Somehow it had been put back together.

The door was open, there was another guest watching television who showed us what rooms were empty, that there was not a dryer for our gear, and told us breakfast was at eight. I phoned and left a message with the proprietors and said we would be gone before breakfast, as we had to be on the water at five. We found out later a following canoe ate the pancakes, bacon and eggs that should have been ours.

We hung out our stuff to dry for the few hours we slept, but put on wet gear at four in the morning and paddled out into a head wind and driving rain.

“Let’s just consolidate our position and survive today,” I said to Steve. “At least we didn’t have to pack wet tents and gear into our kayaks, like the rest of them”.

The customs officer had told us we were the first in the race to come through.

We pushed into the weather for half an hour. The river speed, boosted by the rain, had picked up a bit which tended to exaggerate the wind speed in our faces. It was only day 4, the low river meant overall the current was much slower and we were now 6 hours behind our target times and it looked like we would be an extra seventh night on the river before the finish.

There was a bit of a lee under a rare high cliff. We stopped paddling in the relative calm. The current took us past it while I ate a double serve of warm Mountain House Granola with my Carmacs’ acquired spoon.

Again the next night, Steve found another cabin, toward the north end of a wild life sanctuary.

The race rules required us, in this sanctuary area, to overnight our food in either bear-proof barrels or hang our food in bags a minimum of 4 metres off the ground and 4 metres from any tree trunk and 100 metres from our camp site. Quite an exercise. Our kayaks were too small for bear-proof barrels so hanging was our only option.

This cabin Steve found was set up by the Alaskan National Parks and included, a short distance from the cabin, a bear-proof steel meat safe, so we were spared the exercise of hanging up our food. And set up the cabin was, with a wood-fired stove which Steve soon had roaring to dry our gear, eating utensils and sleeping mattresses up in a loft.

That night, following all the rain, the river rose about a metre, fortunately we had our kayaks tied up as they were afloat when we got to them in the morning. Just as well – about a 200km walk out from that point.

This sanctuary produced a little more wild life. More moose with calves swimming across the river to graze on the relative safety of larger islands. Moose are huge animals and kill more people each year than bears. Swimming moose are well camouflaged, with only their heads exposed. They look like any of the thousands of tons of floating logs on the flowing river.

As did a cougar that I was not aware of until it was perhaps 2 metres in front of my bow. I had to desperately back paddle to avoid hitting it. A cougar on board with me I did not want. It gave me and Steve a real good look and swam on to a large island a couple of hundred metres away. Was this encounter simply a coincidence, or had it been eyeing us off from the bank and come out for an easy meal?

The whole world knew from the internet where we were relative to our competition, but we had little idea. A short 3 hours into the race we had led into the 50km-long Lake Leberge. The Voyager canoe had powered past us on the lake as had 2 of the fastest canoes. With smart and hard paddling we had camped ahead of them all the first night.

The landcrew at Carmacs and Dawson had said we were in the lead. The customs officer had also said we were the first through. We asked campers and casual canoeists on the river if they had seen any racing canoes pass ahead of us and we were forever looking back trying to differentiate between a stranded tree stump and a following canoe. →



Stop: Steve goes through 5 Finger Rapids, just behind the Press boat. Bottom: Steve gets ready for the start at Whitehorse.



Steve is all smiles inside the luxury cabin, maintained by the National Park and its supporters, where he had a fire roaring in the wood-fire stove to dry out himself, Tom and their clothes

The main river in this section is undrinkable; it is full of ash, melting out of a glacier created by a volcanic eruption some 800 years ago. We stopped briefly at a beautiful clear-running side stream to fill our drinking bladders and in doing so the Australian canoe team paddled past.

Steve dived back into his kayak like a man possessed. I followed having filled only 1 of my 3 bladders. Into a strong head wind and finding some faster water, 2 hours later we could not see them behind us.

We found our 2 kayaks had an advantage over just a double as we could scout across the river for the faster water, the slower slipping across to join the faster before splitting again when the current became more elusive.

The last third of the race is down The Yukon Flats where the river basin is up to 10km across and every year when the frozen river breaks up it carves a new path for the main channels, each of which could be more than a kilometre wide. So there are no river maps and we relied on Google Earth aerial photography, some of which showed the river still full of ice.

There are no landmarks to navigate by and we relied on 60 way points I had loaded into my GPS. We did our best to find the shortest and fastest channel but the chasing canoes could

have slipped past us at any time on the other side of the many braided islands.

On the sixth night we stopped an hour early and camped on a small island where we could see there was really only one channel option for any following canoe to take. Sure enough 30 minutes later the Australian canoe passed us. But that was all.

We were in our kayaks the next morning waiting to trigger the Spot trackers exactly 6 hours after we had landed and passed them camped not far downstream. There was their canoe and isolated tent. No sign of life or any preparations to depart. It took us at best just under half an hour from waking to being in our kayaks. Canoes can be faster as throwing stuff in their open hulls is much quicker, but we concluded they were at least half an hour behind us.

But was there anybody else out ahead of us?

Steve's hands by now were very badly blistered and a little infected and my main tent pole had disintegrated. With only a max 6-hour paddle anticipated on our seventh and final day, after a day's hard 17 hours on the water we made camp for the last night this time 2 hours early.

But no sign of them. We had no idea where our competition was when we set out the next day.

After an hour, again battling into a head wind, Steve asked



Tom and Steve leave Carmacs after the spoon rendezvous

me to gaffer tape his hand to the paddle to take the pressure off his blistered fingers. 30 kilometres from the finish the Yukon narrowed into a deep gorge.

Head winds, deeper water and a faster river had us battling into the rain against a steep, wet chop. A grey patch appeared round a corner high on the southern side of the river. Was it a rocky outcrop or the finishing bridge approach? Then there was a patch of light under it. It must be the bridge.

A quick look over our shoulder, no one behind us. As the bridge opened its span before us, there were figures high on the northern side and the wind was carrying their cheers towards us. Then more people down on the bank shouting. The wind dropped and the rain stopped as we turned into the lee, crossing the finish with the bridge towering high above us after 7 days 1 hour 27 minutes and 27 seconds.

We returned the excited shouting from the bridge and the bank. What locals there were had turned out to cheer us in with our beloved landcrew and no sign of any other kayak or canoe.

We had won the longest canoe and kayak race in the world.

For the record the Australian canoeists Rod Spinks and Greg Lennox, finished an hour and a half behind us in 7 days 2 hrs 58 minutes and 6 seconds. That is less than 1% of the race time.

The American canoe team was about half an hour behind them and the Voyager canoe a further 8 hours back.



A team of Aussie women aged from 49 to 62, calling themselves Yukon Buddies and raising awareness of breast cancer, competed in this year's Yukon Quest in Canada. The 740km race, which has attracted a number of LCRK paddlers in past years, is roughly the first half of the course for the Yukon 1000 which Tom Simmat and Steve Pizzey raced. The women completed the Quest in a Voyager canoe in 68 hours 23 minutes. A number of them came to the LCRK BBQ when Tom gave a talk on his race to listen to his exploits. Seen here with Tom are Tracey Bowne, Deb Hirst, Wilma Kippers, Rosie O'Donnell, Vicki-Jane McLean and Ruth Turnell.



Not much water in the Avon rapids

I first raised the prospect of my going to the Avon at a meeting with the lifesavers. They asked me "What was I going to do there?" never suspecting I was actually going to paddle it! Anyway, getting over the insult, I flew across on the Thursday before and prepared on the Friday for the race.

My paddling partner, Steve Randall, and I met up with Matty Blundell and a few guys from Manly Warringah and my trusty partner traded a few insults with them at registration. I won't tell you what we said to Matt but he responded by reminding us we should watch out for the cut-off times – just to get our confidence up!

Once the racing started I never saw Matty as you can imagine. He was up there with the leaders. Unfortunately he couldn't repeat last year's performance when he won with Tim Jacobs. He said later he had a reasonable first day, despite holing his boat, but the second day the tape over the hole would not stay on in the rapids and he had to stop every 400 metres and empty out. Despite this he still finished 60th.

Steve and I were paddling in a broadish K2, a South African-made "Mirage" (not like our Mirage sea kayaks). It was fibreglass with a kevlar sheet under the paddlers. And weren't we just about to give that kevlar sheet a workout!

This was meant to be my training for the Fish marathon in South Africa, but it's an epic paddle in its own right. Day 1 is 57km with small to medium rapids every 2 or so kilos and day



"After the hundredth portage you just drag the boat along"

2 is 78km with ti-trees and rapids except for the last 30 odd k's which is flat water.

The starts were at 30 second intervals so there was a bit of tension in the air. No worries, we just got dressed and left! Paddled for about 200m and then came our first portage. Not enough water to go down the rapid but nothing was going to stop us. There were passages of water from a few hundred metres to a few kilometres and then there would be a "rapid" consisting of water about a foot deep rushing across rocks. Then you get out, carry the boat across the rapid, get back in and paddle again.

This is OK the first few times but after the 30th it starts to get on your nerves. After the hundredth you just give up, get out and drag the boat along! Still, we finished the first day in reasonable order. We drove back to Perth feeling absolutely exhausted.

by
**Tim
Hookins**



Next morning it was freezing and our paddling clothes were still wet from the day before. When we put them on, our body heat made the steam roll off into the air! The first lengths of paddling we couldn't feel our hands at all. Steve fell out of the boat at the first turn, went spluttering under water emitting a stream of colourful language. We had to laugh! What else could we do?

More portaging or grinding down the rapids on the rocks, waiting for the boat to spring a leak. I was amazed how much punishment it could take. Then into the ti-trees where you had to try to discern where the main current was going and follow that. And remember to duck when you passed under the branches.

We managed 5 hours paddling and did about 32km when we hit a small undistinguished-looking rapid and went grinding down it. Without warning we ripped a hole about a metre long in the bottom of the boat and suddenly that was that. Could not go any further. Stuck in the West Australian countryside.

Some young folk were watching the race in the bush, but they were not clear exactly where we were. They kindly took us in their ute for a few k's, but then decided they were getting too far from home and dropped us off on the road.

We then walked towards the next checkpoint for half an hour, no cars came by! Eventually the rescue team came and found us.

They had seen our canoe left at the roadside and took us plus boat to the checkpoint, giving us a big lecture about how we shouldn't have left our boat! How could they find us?

Back at the checkpoint we eventually found our landcrew and made our way home. No glorious finish for us this time. But 260 paddlers out of 500 didn't finish, so it was clearly a bad year.

Still, a worthwhile experience for us especially in our preparation for the Fish in October.



The hole that stopped Tim and Steve. Look at the rest of the scratches — this was a brand new boat.

New BBQ Dates

To accommodate the post-Classic and Christmas BBQs, note that club BBQs have been changed to these dates:
October 27 (post Classic)
November 17
December 15
(Christmas (BBQ))

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Good weather and good racing at Lane Cove

Lane Cove took full benefit of the home ground (should we say home water?) advantage in the Marathon 10 series race on Sept 19, winning 4 of the 6 20km races. And this was despite many of our paddlers not competing because they were race day officials.

M10 Race 8 Lane Cove

Competitor	Div	Time	Plc
Matt Blundell	1	1.28.16	1
Toby Hogbin	2	1.31.55	1
Tony Hystek	2	1.35.47	4
Richard Barnes	3	1.48.02	5
Michael Mueller/ Rob Vallis	3	DNF	
David Bloomfield/ Martin Dearnley	4	1.44.20	6
Jason Cooper	4	1.46.13	8
Tim Hookins	4	1.51.51	13
Craig Ellis/ Scott Gilbert	5	1.44.03	1
Andrew Mathers	5	1.46.47	2
John Thearle	5	1.47.06	3
Tom Holloway	5	1.49.44	9
John Greathead/ Tony Walker	5	1.52.28	11
Tim McNamara	6	1.50.46	1
Wayne Wanders	6	1.53.15	3
Duncan Johnstone	6	1.54.11	5
Derek Simmonds	6	1.56.10	9
Bert Lloyd	6	1.58.35	11
Tony Carr	6	1.59.50	12
Nigel Colless	6	2.00.31	13
Richard Lindsay	6	2.00.35	14
Andrew Benoit	6	2.01.18	16
Andrew Kucyper	6	2.17.35	21
Justin Paine	6	2.17.40	22
Janet Oldham	8	1.36.07	8

Divs 1-6 = 20km, div 8 = 15km

M10 Race 7 Woronora

Competitor	Div	Time	Plc
Tony Hystek	2	1.40.23	3
Michael Mueller	4	1.49.37	2
Jason Cooper	4	1.50.10	3
Michael O'Keefe	5	1.56.43	10
Craig Ellis/ Scott Gilbert	5	1.57.12	11
John Greathead/ Tony Walker	5	1.58.11	12
Derek Simmonds	6	2.00.33	1
Wayne Wanders	6	2.01.04	2
Duncan Johnstone	6	2.05.17	6
Tony Carr	6	2.05.20	7
David Page	6	2.15.15	15
Andrew Kucyper	6	2.18.46	17
David Hammond	8	1.36.51	8
Len Hedges/ Sam Hedges	9	57.26	3

Div 1=20k, div 8=15k, div 9=10k

See Lane Cove marathon race day photos in the Photo Gallery at www.lcrk.org.au

Admittedly one of the winners, Matt Blundell, who again took out division 1, was padding for Manly Warringah, but he's also a dual member of LCRK and we take a lot of pleasure out of seeing him win. And he's going to paddle for Lane Cove in the Hawkesbury Classic to boost our club's chances of winning back the Commonwealth Bank Cup.

Toby Hogbin continued his fine series form to score another victory in division 2.

In division 5 it was an LCRK trifecta with the Craig Ellis/Scott Gilbert double winning from Andrew Mathers and John Thearle.

Tim McNamara made a return to marathon singles racing after a decade in which he has paddled just doubles with an outstanding win in the division 6. He was using it as a final fitness trial for this year's Hawkesbury and declared after the race that he will definitely be in the Classic. Wayne Wanders got away from a string of clubmates and others to take 3rd in this division.

Times in all divisions were very fast and GPSs used by a number of competitors showed the course to be a fraction short.

Again there were some problems with official race times and a revised list had the original times for many paddlers reduced by more than 10 minutes – much to the relief of those who thought they had done well



Among those watching the Lane Cove marathon from the bank was Marg McDonald who made a special trip to continue the links made by her husband, Frank, who died two weeks earlier. Many Lane Cove members and paddlers from other clubs were able to convey their condolences to her. LCRK paddlers carried a black tape strip, in lieu of an armband, on their kayaks to honor Frank's memory. Marg is seen here with race director Tom Simmat and LCRK President Matt Swann.



Division 5 winners Craig Ellis and Scott Gilbert with Jason Cooper, who took time out to go for a swim during the race

and couldn't believe the times they were given.

All in all it was an excellent day's racing in fine conditions, despite the fact that with only 91 competitors the run of relatively small numbers for the Marathon series continued. Even with LCRK having a lot of our people giving up their race to act as officials we still had 29 out on the water, almost a third of the field.

Leading the band of helpers were Matt Swann as event coordinator, Tom Simmat as race controller, and Steve and Caroline Paget and Steve Russell (BBQ). Others who gave valuable assistance, a few of whom also managed to paddle, included Marie Carr, Tony Carr, Nigel Colless, Tim Dodd, Bill Donohue, John Greathead, Trish Hamilton, Len and Sam Hedges, Tom Holloway, Duncan Johnstone, Tim McNamara, Paul

Myers, Phil Newman, Wade Rowston, Mark Sier, Kobi Simmat, Derek Simmonds, Tony Walker and Ian Wilson.

LCRK thanks Blue Earth, Prokayaks, Vadja Kayaks, Roger Deane and Craig Ellis for donations for the raffle.

Record in Myall

Matt Blundell blitzed the field and paddled on his own to win the Myall Classic on Sept 25 by 24 minutes. He beat the previous best time for the race – his own, set 2 years ago – by 20 minutes in setting a record which is going to take some beating.

Lane Cove paddlers dominated the top end of the event, which for once attracted good weather.

A report on the race will appear in the next issue of *Kayak Kapers*.

Myall Classic 47km

Competitor	Time	Plc
Matt Blundell	3.38.20	1
Toby Hogbin	4.06.24	3
Tony Hystek	4.06.30	5
Jason Cooper/ Bob Turner	4.07.33	6
Tom Simmat	4.17.19	7
Craig Ellis/ Scott Gilbert	4.17.57	8
Warren Huxley/ Merridy Huxley/ Marg Cook/ Rob Cook	4.23.04	11
Derek Simmonds	4.41.20	19
Wayne Wanders	4.44.30	21
Duncan Johnstone	4.51.38	22
Tony Carr	4.59.04	27
Nigel Colless	5.05.56	31
Richard Lindsay	5.14.06	33
Andrew Benoit	5.35.54	44
Andrew Kucyper	6.13.15	59
Trevor Distin	DNF	

Myall Classic – 27km

Rod Stubleby	2.35.54	3
Justin Stanbridge	3.33.40	18

Aug 14 Sprints at Regatta Centre

1000m. Race 1: Tony Hystek 4.21 1. Race 5: Nigel Colless 5.11 4, Derek Simmonds 5.27 6. Race 6: John Greathead 5.55 4. **500m.** Race 1: Tony Hystek 2.07 2. Race 5: Nigel Colless 2.38 4, Derek Simmonds 2.39 5. Race 6: John Greathead 3.01 5. **200m.** Race 21: Tony Hystek 0.56 2. Race 22: Nigel Colless 1.04 8, Derek Simmonds 1.05 9. Race 23: John Greathead 1.12 5.

Tandem time in the mountains

Lane Cove fielded two tandem pair teams in the Gloucester Mountain Man multisport race on Sept 12. Of course, they came from the Richard Barnes stable, led by Richard himself. The race comprised a 20.4km mountain bike leg, a 10.7km paddle down the Barrington River and an 8.8km cross country run. There was enough water in the river to provide some mild rapids. Results were:

Competitor	Category	Bike	Kayak	Run	Total	Plc
Wayne Wanders	M45+	1.31.40	1.12.15	1.11.33	3.55.28	8
Andrew Mathers	M45+	1.27.33	1.38.08	51.18	3.56.59	9
James Terpening/ Richard Andrews	Tandem pair	1.06.10	1.10.31	53.50	3.10.31	2
Richard Barnes/ Bob Kenderes	Tandem pair	1.19.39	1.20.38	1.00.39	3.40.55	4

Paddlers put on their running shoes

For a club of paddlers, Lane Cove turned out a pretty reasonable field for the City to Surf on August 8. Once again Richard Barnes took the honours for the fastest LCRK time with 59 minutes 12 seconds, but he was 4 minutes slower than last year and not at all impressed with himself. Alan Whiteman, whose duels with Richard in this iconic event are well known, was a touch further back, coming in at 61.50.

They might be disappointed with their results, but the rest of us wish we could run a slow time like that.

Andrew Mathers wasn't far away with 65.55, and then came Tom Holloway with 72.07 in his first start, Steve Paget 72.12, James Mumme 77.01, Justin Paine 85.45, Martin Dearnley 88.34 and Elke van Ewyk strolling along in a leisurely 155.08.

A sterling performance passing almost unnoticed was Michael Mueller's debut marathon run in the Westlink M7 Cities Marathon, an event three times longer than the City to Surf.

The race was held on the hilly M7 bike path on July 25 and Michael finished 24th in a field of 220 in a blistering time of 3h 5m 41s – only 42 minutes behind the winning time set by a Kenyan.

Michael, who had splits of 1.29.26 and 1.36.15, said he "hit the wall" just before the finish.

Just for the record, his time bettered the 3.12.12 by James Terpening, the 3.19.39 by Andrew Mathers and the 4.12.32 by life member Justin Jones in last year's Sydney Marathon.

Lane Cove out in strength at Akuna Bay Multisport



Happy to be finished: Kyle Stanbridge, Justin Stanbridge, Graeme Jeffries, Dave Kavanagh, Jeff Bannerman, Tim Ellison, Justin Paine, Richard Barnes



Justin Paine was so exhausted at the finish that pairs partner Richard Barnes had to piggyback him across the finish line.

Competitor	Category	Bike	Paddle	Run	Total	Plc
Matt Shields	OM	52.11	1.05.42	1.23.26	3.21.29	7
Matt Blundell	OM	59.22	56.18	1.35.40	3.31.21	13
Evan Oppen	OM	1.04.46	1.11.14	1.21.26	3.37.27	18
John Thearle	VM	1.17.07	1.14.48	1.39.55	4.11.51	27
Len Hedges	MM	1.14.12	1.22.41	1.49.41	4.26.35	6
Wayne Wanders	VM	1.24.03	1.17.13	1.51.57	4.33.14	34
Justin Stanbridge	VM	1.09.23	1.42.32	2.02.53	4.54.49	39
Graeme Jeffries/ Dave Kavanagh	Pairs	57.21	1.08.33	1.29.57	3.35.53	2
John Boakes/ Craig Elgie	Pairs	1.05.31	1.19.24	1.47.11	4.12.08	3
Rob Vallis/ Andrew Blair	Pairs	1.11.45	1.11.39	2.05.05	4.28.30	9
Richard Barnes/ Justin Paine	Pairs	1.17.59	1.23.43	2.11.33	4.53.16	13

Relay times: Dean Wayne paddle 1.05.12, Michael O'Keeffe paddle 1.08.44, Michael Mueller paddle 1.02.51, Jeremy Spear paddle 1.11.51, Elke van Ewyk paddle and run 3.28.02.



Wayne Wanders, John Thearle, Elke van Ewyk, Richard Barnes

Chasing a double in the Murray 200

by Andrew Mathers



The Riverland Paddle Marathon is South Australia's annual marathon paddling festival. It consists of a number of events run concurrently, one being the Murray 200. This gruelling 208km endurance event runs over 3 days from Berri to Morgan, with very little flow assistance.

I'd never heard of the Murray 200 until one night at a Hawkesbury Canoe Classic Committee meeting a letter was presented from the Marathon Canoe Club of SA that mentioned the event. It was on the June long weekend, and as Sunday was my birthday, I thought what better way to spend it than to paddle 69km on the Murray! I ran the idea past my trusty support crew, Marie, and she jumped at the chance to add SA to her long list of "road trips".

We decided that, due to the availability of camping areas at the finish of each day, the first option would be to camp. This was a good idea because I could prepare the boat with supplies for the next day before it got dark, rest and walk the boat to the start.

We arrived mid-Friday afternoon at Martin's Bend camp site but were surprised by the lack of activity. I was expecting to see something set up or signs or information of some kind ... but nothing, except for some speed boats getting ready for a water ski competition the next day. Was this the right place?

We unloaded the boat, pitched the tent and got the boat ready anyway. I put the usual food in the pockets on my PFD with some more food and spare clothes in a dry bag to be placed behind the seat. This time, I also decided to try out some carbohydrate powder that I got from a health food shop in Berri. Later, another group turned up with some outrigger canoes and confirmed that it was the right place.

DAY 1 – Saturday, 12 June

Registration was at 6am and I was given a start time of 7am. The alarm on Marie's phone went off at 5:30am as planned, however, my phone said 5am. Why was my phone on the wrong time? No, my phone was right. It had automatically reset based on the Telstra network to SA time which is minus 30 minutes. Puzzle solved!



Andrew with his new friends Chris and Gill in the Mirage 730

The morning was cool and foggy. The start was signalled with a shot from an antique musket fired by an equally antique, yet delightful, "musketeer" called Gwendle.

I had a slow start, as I often do if I found myself in the middle of wash from other kayakers, but was soon passing most of the other boats in my start. I caught up to a Mirage 730 that was travelling at a reasonable pace and so I pulled in behind it. The two in the double didn't mind me tagging along and told me they would sit on 10km/h. That sounded good as I do the 20km in the Marathon 10 in a little under 10km/h. While we were paddling I got chatting to the two in the double, Chris Butler and Gill Gibson, and they introduced me to another friendly fellow as we paddled past, Bill Robinson.

Each day there was a lock in the river that required a portage, unless you were lucky enough to be in a 6-man outrigger canoe. The OC6 got to paddle into the lock to be released on the other side, several metres lower. At the lock, the double got away from me but I managed to catch up and resumed my position in their wash.

We cruised past the crowd on the bank as we passed the start of the Murray 100 without stopping. I was feeling great. I got an SMS from Marie saying she saw me go past, I looked good and that she would be at all the checkpoints in case I needed anything. The only problem I found washriding the double was that they didn't stop for food. They took turns eating, while the other paddled, which meant I had limited time to eat and had to catch up each time, the result being that I wasn't eating properly. It gradually got increasingly difficult for me to catch up each time they ate and I wasn't eating enough.

I eventually let them go and stopped at the next checkpoint where I expected to see my land crew. However, there was no sign of Marie. I phoned and she said she was busily pitching the tent and that I had arrived at that checkpoint a lot quicker than expected [I suspect there may have been a stopover at a winery somewhere along the way, although that has been strongly denied!].

I had a stretch, got the food from my dry bag, which I couldn't get while I was trying to keep up with the double, and went on my way. After a few regular food stops I found that my energy levels increased again. I paddled the rest of the race on my own, passing a few of the slower boats as I went, and finished the 76km day at Moorook in 8:02:30, about 14 minutes behind the double. The organisers had a tent serving some very welcome chicken or pumpkin soup.

We camped adjacent to the river, collected some branches and got an open fire going while I prepared the boat for the next day by the light of my car headlights. Not such a good idea, as I noticed the headlights beginning to dim and, of course, the car wouldn't start. Not to worry, I was walking distance from the start, so my land crew could deal with it in the morning after I'd gone. This time I had my food taped to various spots within easy reach. I also mixed the carbohydrate powder with an electrolyte tablet so I could get both in one drink instead of carrying two.

DAY 2 – Sunday, 13 June

I started at 7am again on a cool morning. This time I started away from the rest of the boats so I didn't get washed out and pulled in behind my friends in the double ready for a ride for the whole race. Now that food was handy I was confident I could keep up with them and eat properly. Unfortunately, they had an issue and pulled off to the bank, telling me to carry on and they'd catch up later. I was on my own.



“The scenery was spectacular — huge red cliffs carved out of the surrounding landscape”

Later I got chatting to Bill Robinson as I was passing him and he suggested I should be wearing a beanie and thermal pants as I had no spray deck. I took his advice and put these on at the first checkpoint, which was another lock. I was glad I did put on the thermal pants, I felt comfortable and the day was quite cool.

The rest of day 2 was uneventful. Although the river was shallow and weedy, the scenery along the bank was spectacular – huge red cliffs, carved out of the surrounding landscape with houseboats and paddle-wheelers scattered along the river. I had regular stops every 10km where I had something to eat and drink, and as a result I was feeling much better than the previous day. I saw the double go past when I had pulled in at the last checkpoint.

I finished the 69km day at Waikerie, feeling much better than the day before, in a time of 7:26:52, only a couple of minutes behind the double which had stopped for about 10 minutes. Again, there was hot soup available and the camp site had hot showers, and boy did that feel good! The race dinner was on that night at the Waikerie Football Club, where Marie and I sat with, and thoroughly enjoyed the company of, some of the race officials.

DAY 3 – Monday, 14 June

Day 3 was to be an earlier start. I had either not heard this or misunderstood it at the briefing on the first day. As a result, at 6am I was still in my PJ's just starting to think about breakfast when I heard the Race Director call out my number. This meant 15 minutes to the start.

I quickly ditched the idea of breakfast, got dressed and hurried over to the start, thankful that I had prepared the boat and my gear the night before. By the time I got going I had missed my start by 5 minutes. It was still dark, very few boats had lights and it was difficult to see where the river went. This time there were no boats anywhere near me but I had my GPS, so I knew I wouldn't get lost. Later, I managed to follow lights on one of the boats in the distance.

As the sun began to rise I could see that I was catching up to some of the boats ahead of me and I could also see the double in the distance. I stuck to my plan of stopping every 10km and eating and drinking regularly. There were some straight stretches with a bit of a head wind and some wider sections and I could imagine that if the wind was a bit stronger it could have been quite difficult going.

I had my carbohydrate/electrolyte drink about half way. For most of the third leg I got a washride from an OC6. Again, the scenery was much the same as the day before, the tree-lined river meandering through spectacular cliffs on either side. I finished the 63km day at Morgan in 6:41:43, 9 minutes behind the double. Considering I started 5 minutes late and the double didn't pull over, relative to the double this was my best day.

My overall time for 208km paddle was 22:11:05. Out of the 11 boats doing the full Murray 200 I finished 3rd, beaten by a single outrigger canoe and my friends in the Mirage double.

I was happy with the Flash that I was paddling. It was reasonably comfortable and stable and although the conditions were quite favourable this time, I think it probably would have



still been ok had the conditions been more challenging.

Looking back on it I enjoyed the experience of paddling in the Murray 200. I made some friends that I'll no doubt be seeing on the water in future marathons and got to paddle past some spectacular scenery on a river that I hadn't paddled on before.

Walking through frost-covered fields with friends

Two days continuously on the move is a tough challenge for anyone. Throw in some dense bushland, a few mountains, rivers to be paddled and some rain and it's a draining, exhausting test of your determination to keep going.

Lane Covers were among the bravehearts who took on the challenge in the Geoquest race through countryside north, south and west of Port Macquarie on the weekend of the Federal election in mid August.

Toastmaster Goldfish team comprised Richard Barnes, Phil Newman, James Terpening and Andrew Mathers. Goldfish Girls had Marg Cook and Richard Andrews (making up the numbers because they were one girl short), plus Mardi Barnes and Anna Yeadon.

The race started with a 13km ocean paddle from Crescent Head to Point Plomer, then followed a 15km swamp trek, a 15km paddle on the Maria River, a 40km mountain bike leg, canyoning which required a night swim search for sunken markers and a flying fox crossing, a 20km mountain trek, a mountain bike 35km leg, a 36km night time paddle from Telegraph Point to Wauchope, another 35km mountain bike leg, and finally a 15km beach walk.

Conditions were so demanding that a woman competitor from one team was admitted to hospital suffering from hyperthermia and another had to withdraw with the same problem.

Rain on the final night turned the last MTB leg into a quagmire. Toastmaster Goldfish made it through but Goldfish Girls lost contact with each other when race rules required them to split into two pairs for the MTB ascent of a hill. By the time they found each other it was too late to complete the course, so they cycled into Port Macquarie just in time to see their team mates cross the finish line.

But at least they didn't have to put up with watching the election non-result on TV.

Kayak Kapers asked the LCRK competitors for their highs and lows during the gruelling event.

Richard Barnes: "The high was running along the beach on the last leg into Port Macquarie. Phil was concerned we wouldn't make the finish, it was ridiculous running after being out for 51 hours."



Richard Barnes, Phil Newman, James Terpening and Andrew Mathers at the end of a 35km MTB leg

"The low was going through lantana in the dark, coming off a mountain and trying to walk down it, there were no paths and it felt like hours."

Phil Newman: "The highs? There were so many. Probably walking along through frost-covered fields with three good friends on a Sunday morning. The sun came up and everything was white with frost."

For lots more Geoquest pictures, go to the [Photo Gallery at our website, www.lcrk.org.au](http://www.lcrk.org.au).

"The low was not being able to sleep the night before the race, lying awake all night."

James Terpening: "For me the high was the opening sea kayak leg from Crescent Head to Point Plomer. It was my first time out in the ocean. I was with Richard in Kermit and although it was calm near the beach it got rougher when we got further out."



Marg Cook, helped by landcrew Bob Kenderes, settles in for a 36km paddle with Mardi Barnes.



Richard Andrews and Anna Yeadon set off on a night paddle to Wauchope.

Also the enthusiastic greetings we got from our landcrew at each checkpoint. And cycling the tandem with Andrew, with me in the front, was exciting, specially going down big hills.

"The low was one minute being boiling hot, climbing a hill when either cycling or walking and having to take clothes off, and then getting freezing going downhill. I also got cold on the big river paddle."

Andrew Mathers: "My high was looking back on the race. The second day I enjoyed more than the first, there was more cycling and paddling and less bush bashing."

"My low came early on Sunday morning on the trek leg when we were bashing our way through the lantana. I was determined I would not do the race again. Then the sun came up and looking back it was not too bad."

Marg Cook: "The low point was, after having to split in to two pairs during the final bike leg, not meeting up at the checkpoint at the top of a very steep hill. We had no way of communicating with each other and each thought the other was having difficulties."

"The high point was finishing together as a team in Port Macquarie. And one of those stunning things was falling asleep during the long paddle on the last night. I was still paddling while I was asleep."

Richard Andrews: "The high point of the race for me was the long river paddle from Telegraph Point to Wauchope. It was the fact that we were doing it at night, I found it very relaxing."

"The low point was getting lost off checkpoint 14 and going through the lantana at Rollands Plains."