



# KAYAK KAPERS

December 2011

## Dark and muddy night for the Classic

Club spirit was at an all-time high for the 2011 Hawkesbury Classic – and it paid off. Against the odds, and defying all expectations, Lane Cove retained the Commonwealth Bank Cup as the premier club. It was our 8<sup>th</sup> win in 9 years.

The win was all the sweeter as we fielded a smaller team this year and, after Classic officials said several of our competitors would not score points as they had not nominated LCRK as their club, we were resigned to having a much lower tally than usual.

Lane Cove was first, we believe with 1874.8 points, The Armidale School second, Burley Griffin third and Central Coast fourth. We have been unable to get an official points table.

The result is a fine reward for Paul van Koesveld, in particular. His drive and enthusiasm in promoting the 111km race to members raised the bar of pre-Classic preparation to a new height.



He was backed up in force on the day and night by competitors, landcrew and others acting as volunteers. All combined in an atmosphere of encouragement and support which was maintained non-stop until the last of the weary departed from the finishing ramp.

A number of our Classic regulars made this an R and R year and were not on the water, but they were there pitching in as landcrew or supporters through the night. Most have indicated they will be back next year, which augurs well for 2012.

Despite their absence, we had 5 of the top 13 on handicap, which demonstrates the depth of LCRK.

It was an event marked by an early



Kayaks had to be towed in and back out through an ocean of oozing, sticky mud at the Wisemans checkpoint

### Lane Cove competitors in the Hawkesbury Classic

Competitor	Category	Time	Plc	Hcp time	Hcp plc
Bob Turner/ Jason Cooper	LRec2 O	9.05.30	1	9.43.41	7
Richard Robinson	UN1 O	9.15.30	1	10.11.36	11
Jeremy Spear/ John Thearle/ Andrew Mathers/ Gareth Baker	K4 O	9.18.20	1	11.39.02	35
Tony Hystek	UN1 40+	9.28.52	1	9.48.47	9
Tom Simmat	LRec 60+	9.57.07 (R)	1	9.25.34	6
Glen Orchard	ORS	10.02.35	3	11.03.27	23
Rae Duffy/ Cathy Miller	LRec2 L50+	12.05.05	2	10.20.40	13
Lisa Healey/ Neville Bradshaw	BorB2	12.23.50			
Derek Simmonds	MRec O	12.47.50	2	12.53.59	68
Phil Harmer	LRec 50+	12.49.31	1	12.21.49	51
Paul van Koesveld	MRec 60+	12.50.20	1	11.54.52	39
Andrew Benoit	BorB	12.54.36			
John Duffy	BorB	12.56.28			
Chris Thompson	BorB	12.56.35			
James Terpening/ (Mardi Barnes)/ Richard Andrews/ Richard Barnes	K4 O	13.00.52	2	16.47.19	138
Tony Mathers	MRec 50+	13.03.50	2	12.23.04	52
Kenji Ogawa/ (Magnus Heywood)	BorB2	14.26.14			
Craig Ryan	LRec O	14.29.48	5	14.52.25	114
Mike Finnegan/ (John Davis)	BorB2	14.30.55			
Ann Lloyd-Green	TK1 L60+	15.24.35	1	12.03.57	44
Andrew Kucyper	BorB	16.46.12			
Bruce Goodall	UN1 40+	6.38.00	withdrew at Wisemans		
Richard Lindsay	BorB	7.55.00	withdrew at Wisemans		
Meg Thornton	MRec L50+	11.26.00	withdrew at Wisemans		
Phil Geddes	LRec 60+	3.24.00	withdrew at Sackville		
Liz Winn	MRec L50+	4.09.00	withdrew at Sackville		
Steve Newsome/ Craig Ellis	UN2 40+	4.10.00	withdrew at Sackville		
Joy Robinson	UN LO	4.14.00	withdrew at Sackville		

(R) denotes record

energy-sapping slog against the incoming tide, a warm evening, wading thigh-deep through vast stretches of mud at Wisemans and Low Tide Pit Stop, and a dark, dark night. Withdrawals at Sackville and Wisemans due to a variety of reasons included some of our fancied competitors.

Tom Simmat was the only Lane Cove to break a record this year – with a time of 9.57.07 compared to the old mark of 10.10.31 in 60+ Long Rec– but was still a bit disappointed with his result. He had been targeting around 9.10 to give himself a chance at winning the race on handicap. However the incoming tide was stronger than he expected and that plus a headwind put him 40 minutes behind schedule at Wisemans. He won the club trophy for the best performance on handicap.

The club trophy for the fastest entry went to consistent performers Jason Cooper and Bob Turner in the Open Long Rec 2. Despite Bob suffering from back problems in their SLR2 for the last 70km, they went close to the 9-hour mark and were only 4 minutes slower than last year.

Richard Robinson surprised a lot of people, including himself, by recording the fastest Lane Cove time in a single – 9.15.30 in the Open UN1. His high octane fuel was a muddy coloured sports drink which looked as if it was made from the floor sweepings in a chocolate factory. He not only survived the blackness of the moonless night in his tippy Sisson Evolution but was the second fastest single in the race (7 minutes behind Simon Stenhouse, who was in the new Ocean Racing Ski class).

The intensity of the darkness was a problem for many, not only for navigation but also for balance. Fog descended around Spencer but most got through it okay.

Tony Hystek, who paddled much of the race with Richard, was weakened by stomach cramps and devastated to miss out on a record in the 50+ UN1 category. He blamed it on the same nutrition problems which have troubled him in the past. Most of us would roll our eyes at the mere thought of paddling 9.28.52,



**A quick pit stop at Wisemans gave Richard Robinson the opportunity to gulp down a chocolate drink provided by landcrew Stewart Roche**



**Alanna Ewin unhooks the drinking system for a tired Tony**



**Son Daen makes final adjustments to Tom Simmat's Infennity before the start at Windsor**

but for Tony it was a massive disappointment.

For the first time Lane Cove had a K4 in the Classic. Beset by forced withdrawals through injuries, Jeremy Spear is to be congratulated for cobbling together such a fine crew.

It was such a last-minute performance that he, John Thearle, Andrew Mathers and Gareth Baker (back only hours earlier from his honeymoon) had never been together in a K4 until they launched at Windsor to start the Classic. It didn't take them long to get their act on-song and their 9.18.20 was an outstanding result.

Tiny cyalumes were placed on the tips of Jezza's paddles to help the others keep in sync with him in the dark. Pit stops at Sackville and Wisemans for the "flagship of the fleet" were a delight – each paddler had his own individual landcrew to tend to him and it was like watching a well drilled Formula One team in action.

Unfortunately they were not able to score points for the Commonwealth Bank Cup, as officials found they had, in the confused rush to finalise arrangements, failed to fill in all the forms correctly, but they represented the club in style and we were all proud to see the Club K4 in the Classic.

Nothing symbolised the "togetherness" of Lane Cove more than the trio of Andrew Benoit, John Duffy and Chris Thompson. After linking up at Sackville, they paddled together for the rest of the race and gave each other constant encouragement and support. John missed a PB by one minute! What a bummer.

Raise your glass to Meg Thornton, who missed the Wisemans stop and went on to the next checkpoint before realising her error. She retreated to Wisemans before pulling out after 11h 26m. Too often we are blinded by fast times and forget the battlers who endure the pain for longer.

Many great personal battles were fought on the river, some won, a few lost, but none finer than Kenji Ogawa's inspirational comeback after his successful fight against cancer and debilitating chemo treatment. With nephew Magnus Heywood as an untried kayaking "front engine", he paddled steadily through the night to a triumphant arrival at Brooklyn.

You'd think there wasn't much Richard Barnes hadn't experienced after 30 previous Classics but he found a "first" – he went for his first swim in three decades on the Hawkesbury when his K4 capsized at the start of the Big W.

The initiative to establish a Lane Cove meeting place at the Sackville checkpoint proved a huge success. An "LCRK" sign on a pole, lit by a flickering white light and topped by a flashing blue light, was a beacon easily and quickly seen by both paddlers and landcrew. Constructed by Richard Robinson and manned by Don Rowston, it was a mecca for the horde from Lane Cove who buzzed around it like moths around a flame.

It was made even more effective by the brilliant suggestion from Jeremy Spear to set up a spotter system. Armed with a two-way radio provided by Jezza, Tim Dodd and Tom Holloway parked themselves on the bank of the corner of the river just past the Sackville ferry where they could see all paddlers entering the checkpoint. With a list of LCRK competitors and



their numbers, they were able to alert waiting landcrews, via another two-way held by Don, of the imminent arrival of their crews.

A minute later the paddlers were greeted enthusiastically by waving arms and loud shouts of "Lane Cove! Lane Cove!" and "over here, Paul!", "this way, Andrew!" etc.

No chance of not finding your landcrew on this night. And there were lots of extra eager hands to steady the boats.

At Wisemans, LCRK set up camp in the usual spot at the downstream end of the checkpoint and the customary barbecue atmosphere prevailed long into the night.

Nigel Colless and Wade Rowston used times of competitors recorded passing the immediately preceding checkpoint 6km upstream to estimate arrival times at Wisemans, and landcrews had a quite accurate idea of when their crews would come in. Boats were turned around with speed and finesse while the tide was still fairly high.

But when it receded ... well, that was when the mud appeared and the fun started. For a while it was just a case of wading a few metres out into the mud. Then it became 10 metres. Then 20 metres. After that we stopped counting.

It was not a sea of mud, it was an ocean. Gluey, oozing mud that stuck to boats, stuck to paddlers, stuck to landcrews, stuck to everything.

Those competitors arriving a bit later were stranded far out



**The LCRK spotting team at Sackville: Don Rowston (left) waits for radioed messages of arriving competitors from spotters Tim Dodd and Tom Holloway**

from the bank and had to be towed in by volunteers wading knee deep and thigh deep through the morass. When they departed, they had to be towed out again.

The two-legged tow trucks included Matt Swann, Tony Carr, Tim Dodd, Wayne Wanders, Bill Donohoe and others. When they looked at each other's smeared figures, all they could do was laugh. (Later there was an email debate about whether they should be called hippos or mudlarks. Take your pick.)

Up on the bank, everyone enjoyed Andrew Mackay's barbecued sausages, steak, kebabs and other goodies. It's worth driving all the way out to Wisemans just to enjoy a party like this. The enthusiasm and goodwill are contagious.

**The date for the Hawkesbury Classic next year is Oct 27-28.**

**For hundreds more Classic pictures go to the Photo Gallery at [www.lcrk.org.au](http://www.lcrk.org.au).**



**Jason Cooper and Bob Turner (rear) pass through the scrutineering gates at Windsor and head for the river to launch**



**Landcrew spouse Angela has a banana peeled ready for Paul van Koesveld during a pit stop at Sackville**

# Competitors' stories from a long, black night

**Richard Andrews/James Terpening/Mardi Barnes/Richard Barnes**

(K4 Open, landcrew Eric Barnes, Trish Beat): Richard B: "From the start we saw the other K4s cruise off and we had the race to ourselves. We were scooting along at 11km/h and passing other boats which was a dilemma, because we couldn't stop and chat. Coming out of the stop at Sackville the rudder was not work-ing properly, we stopped twice and tied it up with a bit of string. Then just on the first bend into the Big W it was dead calm and suddenly we were swimming. We were totally blocking the corner and a single, No. 129, towed us to the bank. At Wisemans we saw the mud and went back to the boat ramp. James took over the steering at Wisemans. We also stopped at Pit Stop where the mud was as bad as at Wisemans and where Richard A had ambo treatment for a sore arm."



**Andrew Benoit** (BorB, landcrew father Ashley): "I was planning to do the Classic in a Greenlander-type kayak I was building, a skin-on-frame of my own design which is a cross between my ski and my Mirage, but I didn't finish it in time. So I paddled my 580. It was good to stick with John Duffy and Chris Thompson, it meant I didn't slacken off. I didn't have any problems, although I carried 2kg more water than I needed, and I had a really nice paddle."



**John Duffy** (BorB, landcrew James Toomey): "I had a terrific race. Although struggling against the tide, which was like paddling through molasses, I was OK to Sackville where I picked up Andrew Benoit and Chris Thompson in their 580s. We hooked up and finished together. It was great camaraderie, they put up with my 60s and 70s music. After leaving Wisemans I hit a houseboat mooring rope but managed to stay in. I struggled the last couple of k's and missed a PB by one minute. This was my 10<sup>th</sup> Classic and the highlight of my year."



**Rae Duffy/Cathy Miller** (Ladies LRec2 50+, landcrew Trevor Williamson, Kaye Swanson). Rae: "In a trusty Mirage 730, we made a good start, riding the wake of Jill and Judy who were in our class and in a faster boat. They were too fast and eventually we had to let them go. What thrill to get a rousing cheer at Sackville from Tim Dodd and Tom Holloway, that was a surprise, and I'm sure we paddled faster - at least for the next half hour. At Wisemans we were fed and watered in our boat and on our way before we had time to think about it. The one good tide of the evening was near peak flow so it was wonderful to get formula one pit stop treatment with typical Lane Cove encouragement and enthusiasm. The phosphorescence was truly spectacular this year and quite mesmerising. Hats off to all those who compete in the Classic on their own, I find having a partner a great motivation. My daughter was at Brooklyn to whisk me away for a short sleep before boarding a plane for Coolangatta at 11am for a 2-week kayaking holiday in Morton Bay which started at 3pm."



**Mike Finnegan/John Davis** (BorB2, landcrew

wives Alison and Lynette): Mike: "Despite the unfavourable tide and the multiple weed-clearing stops we made it to Sackville to be pampered with home-made soup. We estimated arriving at Wisemans around midnight but our plans went awry. How do supposedly intelligent individuals completely miss Wisemans and only realise this when having to call out '210' at checkpoint J 6km down river? We pushed on highly deflated to K which turned out to be nothing short of a miracle. The K team could not have done more for us. Cups of tea/coffee, scotch finger biscuits, muesli bars, fresh water, panadol and stories! Another impressive bunch of volunteers are those mudlarks that do such a fantastic job at the Low Tide Pit Stop. Great bonfire, coffee and home-made scones and of course mud."



**Phil Geddes** (LRec 60+, landcrew Mike Merton, Kev Mullaly, Geoff Whitford): "After a good start I made steady progress to Cattai, then problems with my drink caused nausea from a pre-existing stomach condition. I was fascinated by the number of doubles and the wash they kicked up, and the way the cyalumes bounced around. While on the bank at Sackville the nausea got worse and I got dizzy, and I changed my mind about going on to Wisemans. I didn't pull out at Sackville, I just finished at Sackville."



**Bruce Goodall** (UN1 40+, landcrew Leah Goodall): "I was soon by myself after the 6pm start, then the Barnes K4 came along after about 20 minutes and I jumped on their wake to Cattai. Half way from Cattai to Sackville I started hurting, I had injured my left hand at work earlier in the week. I didn't stop at Sackville and thought the pain would go away but it got worse. Then I got diarrhoea and had to find a sandy beach and stop. By Dargle I knew I was going to have to pull out, so I backed off. At the club's Wisemans checkpoint I saw the mud so went back to the boat ramp to get out."



**Phil Harmer** (LRec 50+, landcrew wife Ali, her spry octogenarian parents Rosemary and David and 11 family members): "My 6<sup>th</sup> Classic was a grand and beautiful night, presenting the challenge, camaraderie, fun and tussle of a marathon kayak race. My stunning support crew were at Windsor and Sackville to wave signs, fill bladders, serve tea, swap thermals and make lots of encouraging suggestions and noise about what I should be doing in my kayak (go faster, for example). Highlights, too many, included the friendship and advice of LCRK members, the darkling river, winning my category (!) and Ali and David smiling at Brooklyn."



**Tony Hystek** (UN1 50+, landcrew Alanna Ewin): "I washrode Steve and Craig early and that gave me a break on the field, then Richard Robinson joined me soon after checkpoint A and we both washrode an OC6. By Sackville I was starting to feel sick, my stomach knotted and I couldn't eat or drink. I got worse and I had to keep stopping and stretching my muscles. The club K4 offered me a washride at Bar Point but I couldn't take it. The same thing



happened to me last year and in the Myall, it's something to do with my nutrition and I have to fix it. I was devastated to miss the class record, I had done all the work."

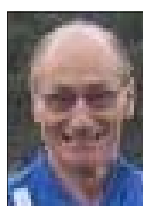
**Lisa Healey/Neville Bradshaw** (BorB2, landcrew Alex Warrar, Falco Thiele, Martin Lord, Michael O'Keefe): Lisa: "For the first 3hrs we bounced from boat to boat seeking washrides and were pulled along in a slipstream to Sackville. At Wisemans we cruised right into a dirty great mud flat where we were greeted by the most generous of volunteers who hung out in the mud up to their knees and thighs. At Low Tide Pit Stop some dear souls who had nothing better to do on a Saturday night called from the bank, 'would you like a cup of tea?' to which I responded 'yes, two white teas, please'. I don't know how many giant jelly fish were hanging in the water but we kept hitting them, they were enough to put the fear in me in the dark."

**Andrew Kucyber** (BorB, landcrew son Jack): "I enjoyed the race immensely. Windsor to Sackville was no problem. I had arranged for cereal with hot milk at Sackville but it was not ready and I had to wait and lost an hour. After a full bowl I set off with the tide but after 2km I suffered pain in my lower gut, people passing kept asking if I was OK. At Wisemans I was offered a cup of hot pumpkin soup which was very salty. Shortly after I threw up and from then to the finish I had no problems, no-one passed me and I was catching others."

**Richard Lindsay** (BorB, landcrew Peta-Jane and Andrew Maynard): "After punching the tide I felt fatigued by Sackville. I started getting nauseous and couldn't keep the fluids down, it could have been a drink mix problem. I started throwing up just before Wisemans and by Wisemans I was as sick as a dog. I decided if I was sick I was sick and I should stop."

**Ann Lloyd-Green** (Ladies TK1 60+, landcrew Trevor Ockenden, Rhonda Lowe): "I have a friend who lives near Sackville and arranged to call out to him between 7 and 8pm during the race. It was 8.30 when I got there on the other side of the river but I paddled over to the opposite bank and called out 'Richard!' and the lights of a lot of cars went on and there was loud shouting, he and some friends had been waiting since 6. It was a great boost. I went into the race with a shoulder injury and just before Wisemans it started playing up. All the way after Wisemans I paddled in extreme pain. At Pit Stop two gorgeous young guys lifted me out of the boat so I could make a toilet stop, that and the scones and tea got me through to the end."

**Tony Mathers** (MRec 50+, landcrew daughter Lara): "On the way to Sackville we passed a party on the bank where a couple of girls were lifting their tops up in an attempt to distract paddlers, of course I didn't look! I averaged 8.6km/h and got to Sackville in the planned time of 3½ hours but was quite exhausted and had a 30-minute stopover. I had a good 3h 10m to Wisemans where the mud was a bit of a laugh. At Pit Stop they tried all sorts of offers to lure me in and when I declined they said 'You've only got 26km to go and it looks hard'. In the fog I didn't know where I was heading and I hoped two boats behind me would help. Then one of them said 'I hope the guy in front knows where he's going.' After Spencer the



tide was ripping in with a vengeance and I was down as low as 4.5km/h."

**Steve Newsome/Craig Ellis** (UN2 Open, landcrew Carmen Ellis): Steve: "Within 3km I had trouble with the steering, it was pulling left. I couldn't feel my feet. I had to get out at checkpoint A, I couldn't feel my right leg. From there to Sackville I was in pain. We got there in 3.40 and I had physio for 15 minutes, but when we got back in the boat it started again and we pulled out at 4.10."

**Kenji Ogawa/Magnus Heywood** (BorB2, landcrew Kenji's wife Gilda): Kenji: "I wanted to see if I could do the Classic after my recovery from cancer. Three weeks before the race I took some Chinese herbs to cleanse my body and lost 3kg, then I lost another 1½kg the day before the race. I was unsure how much energy I would have so I got my nephew, Magnus, who had never paddled before, and we had three paddles together before the Classic. He was quite good, he's a 400 metre runner and he kept stopping to stretch his muscles. We did a slow, picnic speed. We took 109km to warm up and then raced for 2km, overtaking 5 kayaks to the line. It was a good comeback."

**Glen Orchard** (Ocean Racing Ski, landcrew William Pape): "Deciding to attempt the Classic was a last-minute decision. Three weeks out, my longest paddle in the previous months was 2 hours. I immediately began to taper. Pulling up at Windsor, I lost my breath, the sweet smell of dynamic lifter filled the air. Not knowing what to expect, helpful advice like 'No, you won't need a weed guard' settled my mind. The race itself was an adventure down 111km of ever-changing scenery, and the mud monsters at the LCRK Wisemans stop encouraged me to their lair. Escaping Wisemans I wondered what would happen if the mist settled on the water and how lost you could become. My groundcrew was relieved when I finally pulled in at Brooklyn, he needed a real coffee. I needed sleep, but every time I shut my eyes all I could hear were those words 'No, you don't need a weed guard' before waking in a cold sweat."

**Craig Ryan** (LRec Open, landcrew David, Renee & Neil): "Getting to the starting line was easier than expected with Tony Walker, the generous owner of my borrowed kayak having it all ready to hit the water, and hence taking away my best chance of a dignified withdrawal. It was dark, really dark, and I had the Beastie Boys song in my head 'No Sleep Till Brooklyn'. Then a breakthrough, two guys in an open canoe with music playing! Cold Play, I couldn't be happier until I heard the song, and then it stuck in my head 'Nobody said it was easy, No one ever said it would be this hard, Oh take me back to the start!' 30km to go, against a strong tide, I came across 'Bob', paddling at the same pace as me, keeping me going, keeping me talking and me keeping him going, right through until dawn, then he disappeared."

**Joy Robinson** (Ladies UN1 40+, landcrew Kath and Gretel Roche): "My race was short and sweet, not long enough. I had great training and preparation going in, and a fabulous setup in the boat. Despite the 6pm start I was able to keep in contact with other paddlers, although I fell a bit behind due to the tide."



About 6-8km before Sackville I hit a tree, it was pitch black and the tree just popped up in front of me. I was pleased that I managed to stay in the boat but it ripped my GPS off the deck. I was using it for tracking and had been following the track religiously. I had difficulty without it, it was so dark. I took a while getting into Sackville and I wasn't comfortable, so I decided to pull out."

**Richard Robinson** (UN1 Open, landcrew Stewart Roche, Justin Paine): "I wanted to get a good washride early and settled in with a couple of doubles, then left them and caught up with Tony Hystek who was 300 metres ahead with Craig and Steve. My heart rate went up to 168 so I slipped back, but caught Tony again coming into Sackville. We paced ourselves side by side to Wisemans where Tony didn't stop, but I caught him again at Webbs Creek ferry. He was having to make short stops and eventually said not to wait for him, and I went on. I started to run out of petrol badly and was worried I would go for a swim if I fidgeted about in the dark looking for food in the cockpit, so at Pit Stop I stopped on the mud to have a banana and a gel, and that kept me going. The last 10km I was exhausted and crept across the line."



**Tom Simmat** (LRec 60+, landcrew son Daen, Kirri Morris): "I knew I could beat the record of 10.10 and targeted a time of 9.10 to give myself a chance at winning on handicap. Based on previous years I calculated the early incoming tide at 1.1km/h but it was 1.6 or 1.7. With that plus a headwind which was 1km/h, I was 20 minutes behind at Sackville. The ebbing tide should have been 1.3 but was only 1.1 most of the time so I was 40 minutes behind by Wisemans. I was caning it after Spencer because I wanted to beat 10 hours and I went skiing 10 or 15 metres up a mud flat at checkpoint P. It took me 3 or 4 minutes to push myself back off."



**Derek Simmonds** (MRec Open, landcrew Tony Carr, Bryon Merzeo): "I didn't want to be humiliated by Tom Simmat in the Long Rec, so I borrowed Martin Dearnley's Flash and moved to Medium Rec. It's not the same as the Flyer and I hadn't paddled it in the dark. It felt a bit twitchy. At the last minute I changed from my Brasca paddle which has no handgrip to a Slipstream paddle which has a handgrip because I thought it would give me more confidence in the dark. Half way to Wisemans my right hand turned into a claw and my right arm went into spasms, with pain shooting up into my shoulder. At Wisemans the ambulance people strapped my hand tight and I changed to the Brasca paddle. My hand quickly went numb because the strapping was too tight and I stopped at a pontoon to remove it, and I was happy enough from then on."



**Jeremy Spear/John Thearle/Andrew Mathers/Gareth Baker** (K4 Open, landcrew Matt Swann, Ruby Gamble, Marie Carr, Vicki Baker): Jeremy: "It took us 70km to warm up and then we got in the groove. After a great start we were ahead of the Central Coast K4 but slipped in behind in respect of them, then the Penrith K4 came up and there were the three of us together. Near Cattai we pulled over to remove weed from our rudder and lost the others, and we settled down for our own race. Our systems, gear and seats were all excellent, the



result of good preparation. In a 7-minute stop at Sackville we stayed in the boat, and at Wisemans angels came out of the mud and we stayed 23 mins. We were happy with our time."

**Chris Thompson** (BorB, landcrew wife Helen, Murray Fuller): "I did well against the early tide and picked up John Duffy and Andrew Benoit at Sackville. We paddled together for the rest of the race, keeping each other going with little stretches every checkpoint. We had a few other strugglers from one point to another and helped them through, and they said 'If this is how friendly Lane Cove is, we'll have to join.' The luminescence in the water after Spencer was fantastic. Having John with his 10 years experience in the fog was good. It was fun and I enjoyed it, there's nothing like finishing. And in my 2<sup>nd</sup> Classic I was more than an hour better than my 14.06 last year."



**Meg Thornton** (Ladies MRec 50+, landcrew daughter Elouise Blunt): "I crewed for my daughter in Oxfam, so she crewed for me in the Classic. The nicest person I met was the physio at Sackville who fixed my shoulder, I give him a 5-star reference. The funniest moment was just before Wisemans when the Barnes K4 passed me and I heard a lady's voice say to the paddler in front of her: 'Oh, you've got a sore bum, I'll give you some chocolate to fix it, it always goes straight to my bum.' At Wisemans I was on the wrong side of the river and went past the two ferries and on to checkpoint J before I realised my mistake. I had to come back and I decided that was enough. My stars were not aligned this year."



**Bob Turner/Jason Cooper** (LRec 2 Open, landcrew Bob's wife Tracy, Dianne Cooper, Paul Meek): Jason: "Bob's back went on him at the 40km mark, it has been a problem for the last 4 to 6 months. We didn't stop at Sackville but we heard people yelling out. It's pretty good when they do that, a big morale booster. At Wisemans we stopped and Bob had a stretch, then we pushed hard to Brooklyn. We were only 4 minutes behind last year's time and were happy with the paddle."



**Paul van Koesveld** (MRec 60+, landcrew wife Angela, Carol Glasson): "I had a litany of errors. I was overdressed and too hot at the start, then while I was fiddling around looking for a bottle of water while waiting for the Portland ferry I went for a swim. The SES boat helped me back in and gave me a bottle of water because I had lost my drink bladder. I made an unscheduled stop at Wisemans and was towed in through mud up to our knees. I had a fight with my GPS system which I lost, it was giving strange readings and I went the wrong way three times. I hit the mud three times and had to pole back off."



**Liz Winn** (Ladies MRec 50+, landcrew son Tony Winn, daughter Katrina Harvey): "There's an old saying - if you go in with an injury you come out with an injury. 3km before Sackville I stopped for a moment and had vertigo. I had hurt my back two weeks before the Myall and the vertigo was part and parcel of the neck thing. I thought if it happens again and it's pitch black I'll go in. It was a warning and I know when to pull the plug. Despite that the joy of being with my son and daughter made it one of the best days of our lives, we all went on to Wisemans, it was a delightful experience."





The Club K4 had a well-drilled landcrew with Formula One pit stop precision



Lisa Healey and Neville Bradshaw reach Wisemans



Bon appetit! Jeremy Spear enjoys a backrub from Marg McDonald at Wisemans while getting stuck into some high-energy calories.



Derek Simmonds is relaxed as he is manhandled ashore by Tony Carr



The Barnes K4 reaches Sackville without capsizing (that came later)



John Duffy played 60s and 70s music all night long through the speakers on the front of his borrowed Mirage 580



Phil Geddes had stomach and nausea problems and had to retire at Sackville



Right: Rae Duffy and Cathy Miller arrive at Wisemans



Trophy winners Tom Simmat (best LCRK entry on handicap) and Jason Cooper (fastest LCRK entry, shared with Bob Turner)



"What are you going to wear?"



A bike crash is not enough to keep James Mumme away from the excitement. Here he chats with John Greathead while poling his way back up the steep slope from the launching beach at Windsor.



“Arrhhh! There’s something squirming in this hamburger!”



**mudlark:** *noun* 1. chiefly British, a person who gains a livelihood by scavenging for iron, coal, old ropes etc in the mud of tidal rivers 2. an urchin living on the streets and making money by selling objects found in tidal mud 3. Australian a racehorse that runs well on a wet or muddy course. *verb* to play, dig or search in mud.



Above: Janet Oldham and Freiderike Welter ran the recording station at Sackville. Left: Andrew Benoit tops up with a banana before the start.



## South to the Pole

LCRK life members James Castrission and Justin Jones, having become the first kayakers to paddle from Australia to New Zealand, are now well into another hazardous venture: they want to become the first people to walk from the edge of Antarctica to the South Pole and back unassisted. Towing 160kg sleds carrying their supplies, they began in early November and expect the 2200km journey to take 3 months. Check out their progress on [www.casandjonesy.com.au](http://www.casandjonesy.com.au).

## Two times four equals eight

If you’re one of those people who likes the idea of cutting boats in half for ease of storage and transport, let me tell you what I saw on the water recently.

Early last month I was paddling in Parramatta River, in front of Armory Wharf. Across on the opposite bank were a couple of school rowing eights, accompanied by a coach in a tinny.

A Rivercat passed between us at a moderate speed, throwing up some small waves which made me bob up and down gently. Suddenly there was a lot of shouting from across the river and I saw a number of people in the water.

I paddled over to see if I could be of assistance – and, let’s be honest, to have a stickybeak – and saw one of the eights had broken in two. It was a smooth break, no jagged edges, just the smooth end of a compartment.

Obviously the eight was two parts which had been joined together but weren’t any longer.

Fortunately no-one was hurt, there was no panic and the swimmers climbed safely on to the tinny. The eight was transported home as two fours strapped to the tinny.

The moral of this story is: If you’re going to paddle in a joined boat, make sure you’re carrying enough PFDs for everyone on board.

– Justin Paine

## Biggest fund raiser

New LCRK member Chris Thompson has won an Apollo XI for being the biggest fundraiser in the 2011 Hawkesbury Classic. Chris, who raised \$7200, said: “It’s great to paddle the Classic, but what is really great is to know someone actually gets a benefit out of the funds raised.” The Apollo will join 4 slalom boats, a DR boat and a Mirage 580 in a crowded front yard, drawing the comment: “Not much gardening done here.”

## Murray Marathon

The only LCRK members to have put their hands up for the Murray Marathon this year are Jason Cooper and Bob Turner, who are doing it in their SLR2, and Craig Ellis, who is having a Sonic built for the race.

## Escort service

A group of LCRK paddlers, organised by Tim Dodd, provided an escort service for hundreds of swimmers in a charity swim from the Dawn Fraser pool in Balmain around Cockatoo Island on Nov 20. They included Tim McNamara, Ian and Alec Wilson, Kenji Ogawa, Matt Swann, Soon Loo and Justin Paine.

*Kayak Kapers* has a new printer. Our club magazine is now being printed by Pete Johnson, publisher of *The Rock-itt*, a newsy magazine distributed along Sydney’s northern beaches. While a large part of *The Rock-itt* is devoted to bands and musicians, as the name suggests, it also has an expanding coverage of community news, including sport. Pete is keen to add kayaking to the sports covered, and from the December issue on there’ll be a kayaking section. Check it out online at [www.therockittmagazine.com.au](http://www.therockittmagazine.com.au). It’s a great avenue for advertising, so if you’re promoting goods or services in this area, get in touch with Pete on 9975-1105 or [pgjay2001@yahoo.com.au](mailto:pgjay2001@yahoo.com.au).



# A day paddling in Katherine Gorge

by Wade Rowston



I have been wanting to paddle at Katherine Gorge for many years and the opportunity finally arose late in September as part of a campervan holiday, starting at Darwin and doing a loop that takes in Kakadu NP, Nitmiluk NP and Litchfield NP.

The forecast for the day is for 37C and we head for Nitmiluk NP, a meagre 28km east of Katherine, which includes the famous Katherine Gorge.

At the Visitors Centre boatshed kiosk we are attended to by a European backpacker. Fortunately we get the last double and single kayak available for full-day hire. It costs about \$145 for the 2 kayaks for the day.

They are heavy-duty plastics, possibly the heaviest and slowest craft I have ever paddled. They are almost as wide as they are long and difficult to keep straight until you get used to them. You have to wear a PFD and the paddles are plastic with an aluminium shaft.

So off we go into the 1st Gorge. I'm in the double, with my better half Carly in the second seat. Our third son Cal, 16, is in the single.

Katherine Gorge consists of 13 gorges, each separated by small rapids and/or rockbars. The 1st Gorge is 3.2km and we spend the first half just trying to keep the kayaks going straight. The last third starts to get interesting. Small faded orange, yellow and pink sandstone cliffs rise sheer out of the water giving us a sense of what is to come. At the end of the gorge we land on a sandy beach. where there are already another 20 odd kayakers and a bloke operating a leaf blower! Turns out he is clearing the pathway of sand to the next gorge.

As we start along the 2nd Gorge the scenery becomes simply stunning. We enter an area of sheer rugged sandstone cliffs on both sides. The colour and the height are imposing. The first half of the gorge the cliffs are broken only by an occasional sandy beach with signs warning you to stay off as there are freshwater crocodiles nesting there. That's OK, as we had already discovered that you only have to worry about the saltwater crocs, the 'freshies' are very timid and quite small, about the size of a large goanna. Best not to get into an argument with them though.

The second half of the 2nd Gorge is even better than anything I expected. The cliffs are very high, and we feel dwarfed by their size. We head for the shadier side of the gorge as it's starting to get very hot. There are little shallow caves to enter and overhangs to paddle under. It's simply brilliant. This is the dry season but you get a sense of the power of nature that must be at work during the wet season when masses of water tear through these gorges. This gorge is 2.4km long and is easily the most breathtaking landscape I have ever paddled through.

The 3rd Gorge is even shorter at just 1km long. It is still beautiful, but now the cliffs are not quite as high. We soon reach the end where we encounter a huge barrier of rock. This is the turning point for the full-day paddlers as the next portage is a whopper, about 40 mins carrying the kayaks. Given the plastic fantastics each weigh about 25 kilos we make the obvious decision to turn back (no choice really). But first we explore the rock shelf and investigate some huge vortex holes and check the view beyond further into the 4th Gorge.

Back in the kayaks we make a beeline for the nearest little sandy beach without a croc sign and spend about an hour swimming and having some lunch.

The place is almost deserted when we finally arrive back at about 3pm. We quickly change and have an iced coffee, the non-alcoholic drink of choice in NT.

Tips:

1. Book kayaks in advance and for a full-day hire if you want to go past the 1st Gorge. Half-day hire allows only up to the end of the 1st Gorge.
2. Refer to this canoeing guide [http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/find/pdf/Nitmilukcanoeinfo09\\_000.pdf](http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/find/pdf/Nitmilukcanoeinfo09_000.pdf) for detailed maps.
3. Start as early as possible to see the gorges in the lower light and to try to minimise time in the sun and heat.
4. Freshwater crocodiles are timid and pose no threat. However, be aware that saltwater crocodiles do venture up to 300km inland and are perfectly happy in fresh water! Fortunately no snapping handbags around when we were there.
5. The Jatbula Trail walk starts at Katherine Gorge and takes 5 days to reach Edith Falls, another great place to visit. See [http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/find/pdf/Jatbula%20Trail\\_11.pdf](http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/parks/find/pdf/Jatbula%20Trail_11.pdf) for further details.

[This article has been shortened. To see the full article and lots more pictures go to \[www.lcrk.org.au\]\(http://www.lcrk.org.au\).](#)



# Record LCRK turnout in the Myall Classic

by Derek Simmonds

In this year's Myall Classic, 23 Lane Covers tackled the challenging 47km course, 2 the 27km course and 1 the twelve.

With the event timed to coincide with the Wildside Festival, conditions were fortunately on the mildside. Flat water, blue sky, temperature in the low twenties, a gentle sea breeze, absence of weed and big incoming tide made for a cruisy paddle up to the lake.

A couple of sea eagles and a gaggle of black swans graced the course. The start was very competitive and a large bunch kept up the pace well into the first half, making it to the turn in record times.

The return trip was somewhat more challenging, with faster paddlers against the strong tide and freshening breeze most of



Tony Hystek

Paul van Koesveld

the way back. With Tea Gardens in their sights, some paddlers had to deal with messy wash from stink boats as they sprinted to the finish.

The club K4 crewed by Jeremy Spear, Nigel Colless, Craig Ellis and Steve Newsome had its first long-haul outing, but was soundly thrashed by the Central Coast K4. Rumour has it that the Lane Covers had to heave-to and disembark a number of times because someone became a pain in the arse.

Two new craft were unveiled: Liz Winn's Hy Flyer (MRec cut-down Flyer) and Tom Simmat's Infennity (Long Rec modified Fenn Mako).

Jason Cooper and Bob Turner returned a blistering 4.11.12, second in the men's double, with Tony Hystek the winning men's single in 4.17.39 and Tom Simmat powering home on his creation in 4.31.27.

On the 27km course, Liz Winn took out the ladies' title in 3.01.39 with Ann Lloyd-Green runner-up in 3.10.08. Elke van Ewyk took out the ladies' single over the 12km course in 1.53.18.

Stella Kayaks donated very generous prizes. The lucky raffle-winners walked away with a surf ski and paddle, while lucky entry prizes such as paddle covers, T-shirts and caps were showered on entrants.

Once again, Just Paddlers organised a friendly fun race, raising money for the Cure For

Life Foundation and helping prepare many for the upcoming longer Hawkesbury Classic.

A small number of paddlers stayed on to recover on the 4th annual Ride on the Wildside cycle event up the Mungo Road and back on the Sunday.



Heave to and disembark: The Club K4 team of Jeremy Spear, Nigel Colless, Craig Ellis and Steve Newsome



Bert Lloyd (hiding behind a white sun screen mask), Wade Rowston and Don Rowston, with Tony Hystek bringing up the rear

# Why race the hard way?

Tom Simmat saved his best for last. He won division 4 in the final race of the Marathon 9 series at Wagga by the ridiculous margin of 5 minutes plus. His time of 1.44.32 would also have won division 3.

For him it was a simple exercise – read the river!

“The flow in the river was 4½km/h and everyone was paddling against it in the middle of the river,” he laughed. “The K1 guys were going point to point. Dumb! You have to get over on the bank, and I mean on the bank.

“I was with one fellow in my category and I went over to the bank and when I looked over my shoulder he was 200 metres behind.”

There were some other interesting results on the day.

In division 1 Tony Hystek and Richard Robinson teamed up to produce a highly creditable 1.33.58 for 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Derek Simmonds went into division 6 with a 3-point lead in the series championship. But because the race had double points and he came only 3<sup>rd</sup>, he was beaten by one point in his bid to retain his title as division 6 series champion. While Geoff Dawes from Central Coast washrode leaders Bert Lloyd and Don Rowston for most of the race and then overtook them in a sprint to the finish, enabling him to leapfrog Derek in the accumulated points table, Derek couldn't find a washride.

**Have you visited the Lane Cove River Kayakers Photo Gallery recently? If you have been taking part in club activities there's a good chance there is a photo of you there. Check it out at [www.lcrk.org.au](http://www.lcrk.org.au).**

## Paul on the move again

Only 14 months back in Sydney from a 2-year stint in Queensland, Paul van Koesveld is off again. This time he and wife Angela are moving to Howlong, on the Murray 30km west of Albury. They'll help daughter Marika and her husband Matt Partridge care for one-year-old son Jeremy. This will enable Marika to return to work as an animal nutritionist for the farming community. Paul says it's for one year only, then he'll be back. In the meantime he'll have plenty of opportunities to paddle on Australia's most famous river.

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**Kayak Kapers Editor:** Justin Paine 9858-3323

**Committee members:** Tom Holloway, Liz Winn, Paul van Koesveld.

## Bass Strait ahead

Richard Barnes is preparing for his third Bass Strait crossing. Paddling his blue Mirage 580, he will be accompanied by sister-in-law Mardi Barnes (her first, in a Mirage 530), Dave Fisher (first, Mirage 580) and Gary Roberts (third, Greenlander). They are planning the trip for January 8-25, using the 300km eastern route, and travelling north-south, unless weather conditions dictate a change to south-north. There will be three early long hops – 50km Wilsons Promontory to Hogan Island, 30km to Deal Island, 75km to Flinders Island – and then shorter legs to Little Musselroe, on the north-eastern tip of Tasmania.



**This amazing photo was taken at the entrance to Katlian Bay, Alaska. A whale is coming up to scoop up a mouthful of herring (the small fish seen at the surface) just as a kayak passes. The whale's mouth is fully open with the bottom half under the boat. If the whale had closed his mouth before the kayaker furiously paddled clear he would have been lunch. Look at the picture again – he is in the whale's mouth! The kayaker, a local dentist, didn't sustain any injuries from the terrifying experience. All he could think at that moment was "Paddle, man – really fast!"**

## M9 Race 9 Wagga Wagga

Competitor	Division	Time	Plc
<b>Tony Hystek/</b>			
Richard Robinson	1	1.33.58	3
Steve Newsome	2	1.44.38	3
<b>Jason Cooper/</b>			
Bob Turner	2	DNF	
Tom Simmat	4	1.44.32	1
<b>Paul van Koesveld/</b>			
Phil Geddes	4	1.50.30	4
Tim Hookins	5	1.55.28	4
Craig Ellis	5	DNF	
<b>Bert Lloyd/</b>			
Don Rowston	6	1.54.43	2
Derek Simmonds	6	2.02.08	3
<b>Gareth Baker/</b>			
Vicki Longmuir	7	1.18.33	1
Joy Robinson	9	1.06.34	4
Ann Lloyd-Green	9	1.08.00	7
<b>Ian Wilson/</b>			
Alec Wilson	9	1.09.58	8

## Can you handle your offset?

I want to pass on something I have discovered recently which has made a great difference to my paddling, in the hope that it may help others too.

For many years I have used a paddle with a fixed offset and have had to put up with numbness and pain in my hands.

Recently I borrowed a split paddle to experiment with different degrees of offset. I reduced the angle and the result was immediate. I was able to paddle without having to bend my wrists to what seemed an artificial and unnatural position. It felt comfortable and smooth.

I have had a split put in my paddle and while I don't know yet if I am paddling any better or any faster, at least I no longer get sore hands.

So if you're struggling with your grip or feel the blade is not getting the proper pull through the water, borrow a split paddle and experiment with different angles.

– Justin Paine

## Marathon Series points 2011

Competitor	Pts	Plc
<b>Division 1</b>		
Toby Hogbin	148	2
Matt Blundell	100	3
<b>Division 2</b>		
Steve Newsome	377	3
<b>Jason Cooper/</b>		
Bob Turner	242	5
Richard Robinson	186	7
<b>Richard Robinson/</b>		
Tony Hystek	143	10
Tony Hystek	46	=15
<b>Division 3</b>		
Richard Barnes	88	14
<b>Division 4</b>		
<b>Paul van Koesveld/</b>		
Phil Geddes	240	15
Nigel Colless	115	23
Tom Simmat	100	24
<b>Nigel Colless/</b>		
Jeremy Spear	47	30
Tom Holloway	42	=33
<b>Marg Cook/</b>		
Rob Cook	42	=33
<b>Carmen Ellis/</b>		
Craig Ellis	36	38
<b>Division 5</b>		
<b>Don Rowston/</b>		
Bert Lloyd	269	7
Tim Hookins	137	11
Bob Turner	48	20
Craig Ellis	47	21
Jeremy Spear	44	=23
John Thearle	35	27
Wayne Wanders	34	=28
<b>Division 6</b>		
Derek Simmonds	379	2
Wade Rowston	279	5
Richard Lindsay	270	6
Liz Winn	184	11
Phil Geddes	132	16
<b>David Hammond/</b>		
Tony D'Andretti	100	20
<b>Trevor Williamson/</b>		
Gregg Appleyard	97	21
Andrew Benoit	81	24
Paul van Koesveld	72	27
Duncan Johnstone	71	28
<b>Don Rowston/</b>		
Jon Harris	47	=33
Tim McNamara	47	=33
<b>Neville Bradshaw/</b>		
Lisa Healey	43	37
Rae Duffy	36	43
Meg Thornton	32	=45
<b>Division 7</b>		
<b>Gareth Baker/</b>		
Vicki Longmuir	293	5
Tony Carr	110	17
Bruce Goodall	95	20
Andrew Kucyper	83	25
Gareth Baker	50	=28
<b>Division 8</b>		
John Greathead	89	9
<b>John Greathead/</b>		
Tony Walker	45	=13
Tony Walker	42	16
<b>Division 9</b>		
Ann Lloyd-Green	334	4
Joy Robinson	267	6
<b>Ian Wilson/</b>		
Alec Wilson	260	7
Tracey Hansford	185	12
Justin Paine	159	17
Bert Lloyd	42	31
Don Rowston	40	=33
Justin Stanbridge	39	34
Elke van Ewyk	34	38

# Matt Blundell – world champion

We've always known Matt Blundell is a champion and now he's raised the bar to the top rung. On Oct 19 in Singapore he won the Veteran Masters 40-44 year kayak title at the 19<sup>th</sup> ICF Canoe Marathon World Championships.

He did so in convincing fashion, taking the lead early on, challenging the rest of the field and then bursting away at the finish to win handsomely.

"This victory would rank with winning the World Masters Marathon at Penrith two years ago," he said.

Three days later he finished a highly creditable 19<sup>th</sup> in the open category, racing against the fastest kayakers in the world.

Matt won the right to represent New Zealand in the world championships by placing 2<sup>nd</sup> to Olympic silver medallist Ben Fuohy in the NZ titles in April.

The world championships were held in Singapore's Marina Reservoir, a larger version of Darling Harbour in downtown Singapore with the business and financial district, hotels and a big new casino forming a scenic backdrop.

Marina Reservoir was formed in 2008 when the Marina Barrage was completed, turning the former Marina Bay and Kallang Basin into a new downtown freshwater storage area. It is a choice venue for a range of water sports including kayaking and sailing.

In the middle of the water is a floating soccer field, connected to the shore by a bridge. Competitors had to portage across the soccer field – they had to get out of the kayaks on to a pontoon, carry their boats to the other side of the field, and then launch from another pontoon.

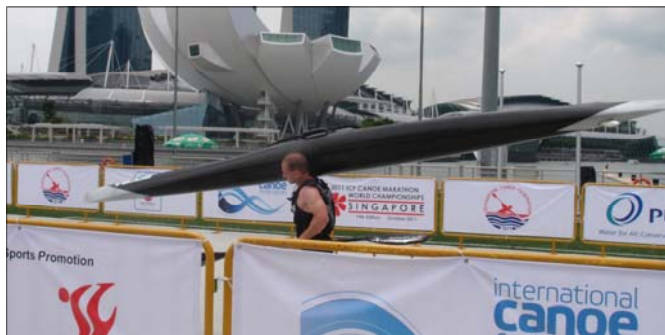
The open title event of 30.1km was divided into 12 laps with 7 portages. The 40-44 masters event was shorter at officially 21.5km (Matt said it was actually about 22.5km) with 5 laps and a couple fewer portages.

Has anyone ever heard before of a kayak race requiring competitors to race across a soccer field with their craft?

In the masters race, Matt took the lead early and set a steady pace before Australian Mario Vesely surged to the front. Then Russian Alexey Terehov made a break and only Matt could go with him.

"I looked around and everyone was gone," he said.

"I settled into a steady rhythm and would lead for 3½km of



**Matt sprints with his K1 through the portage**



**A string of competitors approach the long portage across the island soccer field**

each lap, and then the Russian would go ahead and lead for 500 metres into the portage. We were washriding each other for 4 laps.

"On the 5<sup>th</sup> and final lap I got away and had about 20 metres on him going into the last portage. I got extra space on him during the portage and extended the lead in the last kilometre to the finish."

Matt won in 1.41.56, with the Russian 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1.42.23, another Kiwi, Glen Muirhead 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1.44.56 and Vesely 4<sup>th</sup> 1.49.34.

Matt's portaging ability played a major part in his win.

"I practised portaging a lot in training around Narrabeen Lakes, using any beach that was available," he said. "We all run at a similar speed, there's a lot to do with speed in and out of the boat – it's a question of being able to stand up in the boat and get out."

Matt found the open category of the world championships "a big step up" from the age division. The field of 38 included British world champion Ben Brown, New Zealand compatriot Ben Fuohy and a host of European contenders, including the traditionally strong Spanish contingent.

Hank McGregor from South Africa led from the start and controlled the whole race, eventually winning in 2.16.11. Matt was 19<sup>th</sup> in 2.30.8.

"McGregor had a big lead after 3 laps but waited for the field, I guess he didn't want to risk blowing up," Matt said. "There was a lead group of 7 or 8 at the final portage but he outsprinted them and led the whole of the last k, he was always in front.

"I had a good start and was at the back of the leading group, but then the heat got to me and I had to slow down.

"I don't handle the heat and humidity very well, and it was 35°C and 85% humidity every day. It's a fine line – if you're going too fast you're overheating, but if you're not pushing you're falling further and further behind.

"Coming from Durban, McGregor is used to that sort of weather. There's no humidity in Wellington, just wind and rain."

An interesting point about the championships was that not only could competitors not use GPSs, they could not even wear a watch.



**Matt on the podium with Alexey Terehov and Glen Muirhead**



**Matt, 2nd from bottom right, in a handy position early in the race**