



December 2013

The Cup stays in Lane Cove hands

The 2013 Hawkesbury Classic marked another well-earned victory for Lane Cove River Kayakers, reinforcing our position as the dominant club in this great annual race. It was also a personal triumph for Glen Orchard who was the fastest single and won both the LCRK trophies for the fastest club time and best in the club on handicap.

Lane Cove retained the Commonwealth Bank Cup, for the club with the highest number of points accumulated by all its paddlers, for the 10th time in 11 years. As was the case last year, Central Coast was 2nd and The Armidale School 3rd. Once again, points tallies for the placegetters were not disclosed. Lane Cove claimed 2100 points in our submission.

The result was a justified reward for the careful and skilfully organised preparation on both a team and individual basis over the previous two or three months. Well-attended seminars, training sessions and published articles were supplemented by personal coaching.

Over the past three or so years the Lane Cove entry in the Classic has gone from being a highly motivated but casual collection of enthusiasts to a meticulously prepared team. Under the direction of Paul van Koesveld and other senior members of the club, and expert advice and assistance of high performers like Tom Simmat and Tony Hystek, experience and skills were channelled into a unified assault. And it is worth remembering that this year's win was achieved in the absence, for a variety of reasons, of several of our best paddlers.

The Classic is also a great unifying event. Almost every member of the club was involved in one way or another. Nearly half were competing (look at the long list on page 3) and others were acting as landcrew and/or helping out at checkpoints. There was a constant buzz of excitement at Sackville and Wisemans checkpoints where helping hands not only fed crews and replenished supplies but washed and polished the mud off boats and their occupants.

With our record of achievement in the Classic, Lane Cove has long been accepted as the club to go to if you want to paddle the Classic, particularly if you're a first-timer. Never has this been more demonstrated than this year. One of our new

members who has just added a Classic finish to his CV, that big cheery bloke named Okkie Esterhuizen, summed it up in a message to members which said the club performance was "a true reflection of what I have experienced at LCRK in the past 3 months I have been a member. A special club, full of special people that make special things happen! Well done and a privilege to be part of the family."

Glen Orchard entered the race hoping to be the fastest single and achieved that goal. On a dark night when the tides were not in favour of the faster paddlers, he expected a time of about 9½ hours but crossed the line in 9h 1m 14s. And, naturally, he was disappointed he didn't break 9 hours.

He quickly left the pack behind from the 5.30pm start and after threading his way through the field of earlier starters spent most of the race on his own. "It was a lonely dark night and it became a mental game – it's too easy to slow down when you're on your own," he said.

Only a triple and a single (both LCRK entries), which started an hour and an hour and a half earlier respectively, remained ahead of him. Paddling into the tide after Wisemans he was caught by the double of Greg Slade and Steve Monger and stayed with them for 20 minutes until Pit Stop, where he had to pull in

and stretch his legs out in the mud. He reckoned he had 15 minutes of stops altogether, including a cup of coffee at Wisemans, a wait at the Webbs Creek Ferry and brief stretches on the river.

He did the race on a new Glide ski which he picked up only a week before and had just one trial paddle on. "It was great – when I was hitting the bottom with the paddle I couldn't tell I was in shallow water," he said.

Glen said his training "went well" and all sessions were



Glen Orchard won the two LCRK trophies for fastest and best on handicap in the club, the first person to win both



The K4 men: Peter Edney, Merrick Underwood, Neil Raffan, Jack Kesby



The K4 women: Merridy Huxley, Rae Duffy, Dee Ratcliffe, Clare McArthur



Tom Holloway was a category winner in his rebirthed BurnX



Paul van Koesveld and Phil Geddes repeated the category win they had in the 2012 Classic



Bob Turner is resuscitated at Wisemans by Tony Hystek and Carmen Cooper

below 3 hours. His training regime was 2 hours slow on Monday, 2 hours slow on Wednesday plus a fast LCRK time trial, 2 hours of squad on Friday which was a mixture of fast and slow, and a downwind ocean paddle over the weekend.

Following on from Toby Hogbin's record-breaking win on an Epic V12 last year, Glen's effort strongly backs the ocean racing ski as the boat to paddle in the Classic.

This year's Classic was threatened almost up until the last minute by severe bushfires which not only ravaged the Blue Mountains but had the potential to make conditions dangerous along the route of the Classic. A couple of days respite from gale-force winds allowed the fires to gain control and the Classic was able to proceed. The timing was good – a week later more bushfires struck around Dargle and Lower Portland.

Times this year were generally slow – only two entries beat 9 hours and both were doubles. This had been expected, with the faster paddlers finishing into an incoming tide. The fastest time was 8.50.56 by Slade and Monger in the 40+ long rec 2.

And there weren't many records set, but 5 of those came from Lane Cove competitors. Ann Lloyd-Green smashed the ladies 60+ long rec record by almost an hour in 14.02.57. With the ocean racing skis being expanded into age categories, Glen Orchard's time became a 40+ record. Likewise, the times of Caron Jander in the ladies 40+ ORS and Meg Thornton in the ladies 50+ ORS go into the record book.

It was the first time a quartet of ladies aged 50+ had gone down the river in a K4, so the 10.53.59 of Rae Duffy, Merridy Huxley, Clare McArthur and Dee Ratcliffe became a record.

At race finish at Mooney Mooney, LCRK immediately made its presence felt by having the first two boats across the line. The trio of Chris Quirk, Stuart Myers and David Goodie in their unlikely 3-seat surf ski (see story page 12) – which would take a lot of beating for the title of ugliest boat in the race – were first to emerge out of the darkness. Leaving early in the 4.30pm start, they were always a good bet for line honours.

Only 11 minutes behind them Jason Cooper came in with a superb sub-10-hour effort – 9.57.28 on his Think Uno Max ski. He also got away early by going in the Brooklyn-or-Bust.



James Mumme and John Thearle cruise into Wisemans



Happy finishers: Trevor Waters and Cathy Miller at Mooney Mooney

Bob Turner stopped the clock at 10.07.17 in a brand new SLR. Overseas travel had prevented him having a single Wednesday night club paddle this year, and to compound things he hurt his back unloading the new boat. "Saturday started with a visit to the osteo, who told me I shouldn't be paddling. Not part of the plan, but I thanked her for the advice and paid the bill anyway," he said. "Importantly, my time was 31 seconds faster than the 10.07.48 Kristy Benjamin, my regular doubles partner, did for her MRec record in 2011. Next year's M10 series would have been unbearable if it had been slower!" (Kristy established a record this year with 10.16.24 in the ladies open ORS, Bob, so choose your words carefully. - Ed.)

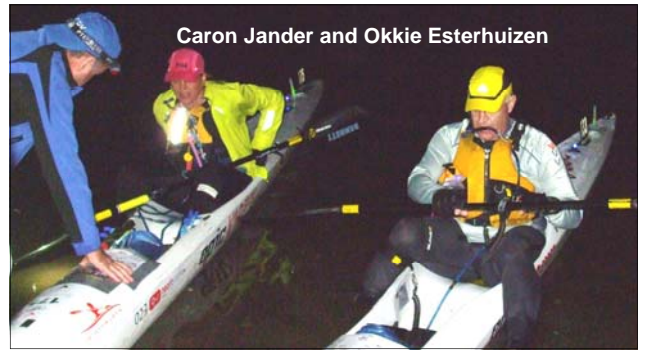
Tom Holloway, in his doctored Burn which he transformed from a K1 into a medium rec (see story page 13), had an outstanding race to win the open medium rec in 10.25.05. Nick Chai was strong throughout the night and finished in 10.35.19 in the 40+ long rec, while Matt Swann had the pedal to the metal all the way for an 11.15.37.

John Duffy continued what may become an LCRK Classic tradition in paddling the club boat, the *Frank McDonald* Flash, which belonged to a former member who died 3 years ago. He dominated the highly competitive 50+ medium rec category, winning by nearly 53 minutes. Last year Tom Holloway paddled the boat to victory, noting that "it was nice to take Frank down the river one more time".

"Admiral" Max Lyons, who does such a sterling job each year greeting every single finisher at Mooney Mooney, informed the crowd at the finish this year of the history involved and commented that "Frank McDonald's spirit is still paddling down the river the Hawkesbury Classic". (Frank's wife Marg later sent the following message from Coffs Harbour, where she now lives: "It was lovely that John let me know he was paddling the *Frank McDonald*. It certainly has been well used going down the Hawkesbury. Tom last year and then John this year, and both in very commendable times. Frank would have been very pleased. I must admit, I did feel rather strange this year not being a part of the event. This was the first time in 11



Richard Barnes gets a helping hand at the start from father Eric



Caron Jander and Okkie Esterhuizen

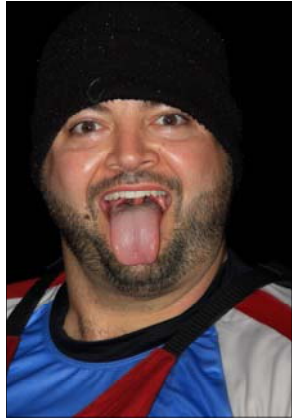
Lane Cove results in Hawkesbury Classic

Competitor	Category	Time	Plc	Hcp time	Hcp plc
Glen Orchard Chris Quirk/ Stuart Myers/ David Goodie	ORS 40+	(R)9.01.14	1	9.38.02	5
Jason Cooper	BoB	9.16.54			
Bob Turner	BoB	9.57.28			
Bob Turner	LRec1 50+	10.07.17	1	9.45.25	9
Peter Edney/ Jack Kesby/ Neil Raffan/ Merrick Underwood	K4 O	10.19.40	1	13.19.22	114
Tom Holloway	MRec O	10.25.05	1	10.30.05	25
John Thearle/ James Mumme	LRec2 40+	10.29.55	2	10.53.13	32
Nick Chai	LRec 40+	10.35.39	2	10.32.28	26
David Hammond/ Tony D'Andreti	LRec2 O	10.37.35	1	11.22.13	52
Phil Geddes/ Paul van Koesveld	LRec2 60+	10.45.46	1	10.35.26	27
Jeremy Spear	UN1 50+	10.47.36	1	11.10.16	42
Rae Duffy/ Merridy Huxley/ Dee Ratcliffe/ Clare McArthur	L K4 50+	(R)10.53.59	1	11.44.55	48
David Young	ORS 50+	10.59.35	2	11.22.40	53
John Duffy	MRec 50+	11.02.35	1	10.28.04	24
Matt Swann	LRec 50+	11.15.37	2	10.51.18	31
Cathy Miller/ Trevor Waters	X LRec2 50+	11.15.45	3	10.21.41	21
Craig Ellis	BoB	11.27.05			
Jeffrey Tonazzi	MRec 40+	11.58.50	3	11.43.01	66
Tom Hookins	ORS 50+	12.04.01	2	12.13.26	87
Paul Seaberg	ORS 40+	12.16.18	5	13.06.22	109
Okkie Esterhuizen	ORS 50+	12.19.03	4	12.44.55	98
Caron Jander	L ORS 40+	(R)12.19.12	1	11.15.38	49
Derek Simmonds	LRec 60+	12.19.20	2	11.37.56	61
Kenji Ogawa	LRec 60+	12.35.37	3	11.53.18	74
Anjie Lees	L ORS 40+	12.38.35	2	11.33.12	58
Meg Thornton	L ORS 50+	(R)13.14.40	1	11.40.06	63
Ruby Gamble	L MRec O	13.53.25	1	12.02.34	79
Ann Lloyd-Green	L LRec 60+	(R)14.02.57	1	11.42.22	47
Richard Barnes	OC1 50+	14.23.34	1	13.31.45	119
Adrian Flemming	BoB	14.27.04			
Jonathan Peters	MRec 40+	14.39.44	6	14.20.23	134
Chris Thompson	BoB	14.42.53			
Richard Diaz	BoB	14.48.33			
Bettina Otterbeck	L TK1 O	15.16.07	1	13.10.37	111
Heather Kent	L MRec 40+	15.27.39	1	12.56.27	104
Andrew Kucyper	BoB	15.38.50			
Bruce Goodall	LRec O	6.15.00	Withdrew	Wisemans	
Shane Gibson	ORS 40+	4.15.00	Withdrew	Chkpt E	
Christian Cox	ORS O	2.50.00	Withdrew	Sackville	
Neil Duffy	MRec 50+	4.02.00	Withdrew	Sackville	
Rob Manning/ Ben Eagleston	C2 O	4.05.00	Withdrew	Sackville	
Justin Paine	MRec 60+	4.06.00	Withdrew	Sackville	

(R) denotes record



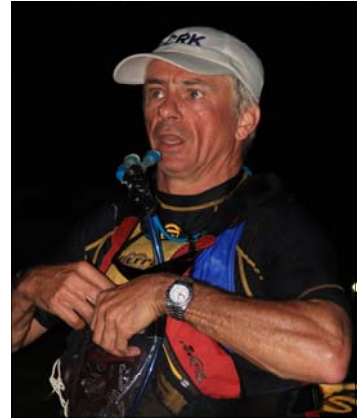
Anjie Lees



Tony (Keg) D'Andreti



Tim Hookins



Jeremy Spear



Okkie Esterhuizen



Matt Swann



Ruby Gamble



Jeff Tonazzi



Paul Seaberg



Chris Thompson



Richard Diaz



Derek Simmonds

years that I wasn't there. However, I was in spirit, along with Frank.")

The club K4 also had an outing. Peter Edney and Jack Kesby were joined by Neil Raffan and after searching desperately for a fourth (sounds like a game of bridge) were joined by Merrick Underwood in time for two shakedown paddles together before the race. Merrick worked nightshift the night before, slept during the day and caught a train to join the others. He slept again on the train, overshot Windsor and woke up at Richmond. A taxi got him to the river 45 minutes before the 6pm start.

There were outstanding class wins and good times in the conditions from Phil Geddes/Paul van Koesveld, Dave Hammond/Tony D'Andreti and Jeremy Spear. Jezza used jetlag from an overseas trip to advantage and was happy to stay awake through the night.

Our ladies were not to be outdone and category winners included Ruby Gamble, Bettina Otterbeck and Heather Kent.

Each year a number of first-timers do the big race, and they acquitted themselves admirably. Our "Classic virgins", some new members and others taking the plunge after a longer

apprenticeship, included Jack Kesby, Neil Raffan, David Young, Jeff Tonazzi, Paul Seaberg, Okkie Esterhuizen, Adrian Flemming, Jonathan Peters, Richard Diaz, Christian Cox and Heather Kent.

Memories to cherish from the race include:

- Richard Barnes paddling his 33rd Classic in a single outrigger, complete with his customary Aussie flag, because he wanted to do "something different".
- Tony Hystek dashing across the mud from boat to boat at Wisemans to stick duct tape on exposed cyalumes which were blinding paddlers.
- Duncan Johnstone and Paul Gibson tirelessly washing the mud off boat after boat which pulled in at Wisemans, even washing paddlers' feet before they climbed back into their craft – an effort much appreciated by the recipients.
- Swims by Tim Hookins, Meg Thornton, Angie Lees and Caron Jander, the first two brazenly right in front of waiting landcrews at Sackville and Wisemans respectively.
- Andrew Kucyper paddling the wrong way after eddies turned his boat around when he mistook a brightly lit cruiser for a checkpoint.



Paul Gibson and Duncan Johnstone in non-stop action at Wisemans

- Caron Jander and Okkie Esterhizen preparing for the race in true South African style with a beer and biltong at the pub.
- Paul Seaberg clinging to a channel marker and phoning his landcrew, only to get a wrong number and wake someone else up at home at 4am.
- Personal Classic milestones, to be recognised by medals, going to Stuart Myers (completing 15 Classics), Derek Simmonds (10 Classics) and Rae Duffy, Dave Hammond, John Thearle and Paul van Koesveld (5 Classics).

Pre-race injuries forced Tony Carr and Andrew Benoit out of the Classic, but Derek Simmonds avoided a similar fate by seeking a second medical opinion, which gave him the green light, after his GP said he should not risk further injury to a strained shoulder – he finished the race without further damage.

Club support at Windsor, Sackville and Wisemans once again was amazing, and the competitors were full of praise for the assistance and encouragement they received. It's dangerous singling individuals out but special mention goes to Paul van Koesveld for masterminding the club's preparation over the previous couple of months; Nigel Colless and Duncan Johnstone for setting up the marquee at Windsor on race day (then going for an early paddle) and at Wisemans; Tim Dodd, Don Rowston and Jon Harris for organising paddlers' reception at Sackville; Richard and Joy Robinson for checking arrivals at Wisemans, and Duncan Johnstone and Paul Gibson for tirelessly washing the mud off both boats and their inmates at Wisemans; and Wade Rowston for being everywhere despite also landcrewing.

The post-race post mortem BBQ the following Wednesday gave competitors the opportunity to tell of their race experiences and, as usual, was very entertaining. Among those present were veterans Tom Simmat and Tim McNamara, both recovering well from major surgery 9 days earlier. Wade Rowston announced that the club had made a special donation of \$200 to Andrew McKay who interrupted house-moving activities to once again turn up at the club's Wisemans checkpoint and operate a BBQ for LCRK competitors and landcrews throughout the night.

About 550 great photographs of Lane Covers at the Classic can be seen on our website (go to Photos, then LCRK Photostream on Flickr), or at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/lcrk/sets/>.



John Duffy stretches at Wisemans checkpoint



Stuart Myers, David Goodie and Chris Quirk prepare to embark in their composite 3-man ski

Classic competitors tell their stories

Richard Barnes (landcrew father Eric Barnes): This was my 33rd Classic, and Dad's 32nd as my landcrew. It was nice to start early at 4.15pm. I paddled an outrigger which was different and exciting, it's really quiet and really dry – you don't have the paddle going across in the air so you don't get dribble on you, although your feet are in water. All went to plan – slow and steady. I had one training paddle, an M10 at Grays Point, that was enough. I borrowed the outrigger from Virginia Head who got me to tip off without the outrigger hitting my head.



Nick Chai (landcrew Michael Mueller): I felt so good throughout the night I thought Michael must have slipped something into my drink. It comes down to nutrition and keeping hydrated, I had one of those nights where you feel good. I started well with a group which included Tom Holloway and Bob Turner and stayed with them to C. After that they were a bit too quick for me. It was pretty lonely from then on. It was really dark and I had no idea where I was going, after Wisemans, I had to wait half a dozen times for other people. There's something to be said for a GPS system that tells where you are going.



Jason Cooper (landcrew newlywed wife Carmen): I was first to the bridge in the first start, BoB1. I paddled with Craig Ellis and another guy to Sackville and didn't stop there. At the beginning of the Big W I was caught by our 3-man ski and they went ahead. We pulled out of Wisemans together and they took off, they were too quick for me to stay with them. It was good to come in second in line honours. I was hoping for 10.30 and did a 9.57. It was all down to the expertise of my landcrew and we're still happily married.



Christian Cox (landcrew parents Bob and Gail Cox): I threw my neck and upper back out a week before the race and despite lots of physio, chiro, Panadol and Voltaren it was still giving me trouble on race day. I could not hold the pace I had been holding in training and my back was going downhill, so I pulled out at Sackville. Very disappointing, as I had done the work in training. I'll be back hopefully injury-free next year.



Richard Diaz (landcrew Peter Cochrane): 21 years ago as a member of Apex I manned the checkpoint at Spencer, little knowing that 21 years later I would be one of those doing the race. I saw what I thought were lots of older people getting out of boats and I thought "They're nuts!" This was my first Classic. I enjoyed myself. The club was very supportive and the information provided was very good. I studied Tom Simmat's advice about what track to follow going through the Big W but it was so dark I didn't even know I was in the big W. It was a bit nostalgic doing the whole thing as it brought back many memories.



John Duffy (landcrew son Campbell Duffy, Rex Mellor): I am very grateful to the club for use of the *Frank McDonald* Flash and was able to complete my 12th Classic with a PB. I have Matt Swann and Derek Simmonds to thank. We pushed hard at the start and shared washriding to virtually Sackville. I hadn't planned to go that hard but that tempo set the foundation for the rest of the night. Matt was the one pushing us and I shared half of the leg to Wisemans with him



also. I felt good at Wisemans and was only on the bank for 5 minutes before I got back in, and in something I won't forget, had Paul Gibson wash the mud off my feet, very Jesus-like at the Last Supper. I struggled between K and N but sniffed the finish line coming round the corner at O and finished strongly with a double that I picked up at Bar Point. I am conscious I have crossed over from simply participating in the Classic to now competing, and that's something that can only eventually end in disappointment, but for now I will enjoy the moment. I also know there is no turning back.

Neil Duffy (landcrew daughter Megan, Peter Brown): In the 6 weeks leading up to the Classic I had deep vein thrombosis, a pulmonary embolism and swine flu, and had only two paddles – 40km and a 20km. I started well into the wind, then my bum began to get sore. After B I got out at a beach and a friendly farmer came down and offered me a camping spot. I started again and my back and stomach muscles cramped up. 500 metres from the Sackville ferry I was dry retching, so I pulled the plug and stopped at Sackville. I'm not happy and have already started planning for next year.



Rae Duffy/Merridy Huxley/Dee Ratcliffe/Clare McArthur (landcrew Warren Huxley, Peter Osmond, Harry Havu, Mark Raddatz, Nicky Barry): Rae: We had water-skiers near checkpoint A and had to dodge their wash, which is not easy in a K4. We were slower than we had hoped but just kept going and everyone worked well together with no major dramas. Clare's cadence at the front was amazing, she didn't miss a beat. Merridy had picked up a parasite walking the Kokoda Track a month before and was vomiting after Wisemans but she's tough and there was no way she wasn't going to finish. We had a good night and were ecstatic to have done the race in a K4, it's never been done before by women over 50 so we set a record. Special thanks to Tony Hystek for training us to paddle a K4.



Peter Edney/Jack Kesby/Neil Raffan/Merrick Underwood (landcrew Craig Ryan, Wade Rowston, Duncan Johnstone): We were first to the bridge in the 6pm start and motored for the first 25km, then started to tire and Sackville came at the right time. After that we were good again, but started feeling it over the last 5km into Wisemans. We had a 3-stop strategy and pulled into Pit Stop where we scored some caramel slices. Jack and Neil were Classic first-timers and although Merrick did it 10 years ago he hadn't paddled for three years until two trials runs in the week leading up to the race. We had a good crew with no arguments. We had a really good race.



Craig Ellis (landcrew Carmen Cooper): The early wind and tide were manageable and I was fast to Sackville. About 10km before Wisemans some

wakeboarder went past doing donuts, up and down the river making waves. I was trying to keep my balance and in one lurch twitched my back. From Wisemans to the 80km was tough, my back hurt and we were doing only 7km/h. My GPS broke down there and I and 4 others got lost! I took an hour longer than I had hoped.



Okkie Esterhuizen (landcrew Martin Solms): This was my first Classic. I had a spinal fusion 13 months ago which took me out of last year's race. It all went better than I expected. My mental approach was first section warm-up, second section race, third section cool down. When I finished I could have done another 20 or 30k's. This was the product of good training and nutrition up to and during the race. Highlights were the arrival of darkness and seeing all the stars, the quality of the logistics in the event, and being able to participate in an event like this.



Ruby Gamble (landcrew Amy Bromhead): Last year I finished the Classic crying. This year I finished two hours quicker and laughing. I arrived in Wisemans on time, but I was tired and dreading the next stage. Just past the ferry Anjie caught up to me, and she turned my race around. It's amazing what a difference it makes to have someone to talk to and share washriding with. Anjie didn't let me stop until Low Tide Pit Stop, where I found a new burst of energy - I think there's something in the tea. Tom's tips on baby food and apple juice worked perfectly for me and I stayed positive with Richard's advice of saying something cheery to each checkpoint volunteer. Can't wait to knock more time off next year!



Phil Geddes/Paul van Koesveld (landcrew Phil's wife Rita, Paul's wife Angela and son Blake): We paddled well and stopped too much, but were still half an hour faster than last year. Our planned 5 minutes stop at Sackville became 15 minutes, and the planned 20 at Wisemans became 35. Technically we thought we paddled well and it was a lovely night apart from the tides which were worse than last year. We had all the "old man" creaky bones problems and other aches and pains. Once it got dark we couldn't see anything because the front cyalume was not properly covered and we had to stop to fix it.



Shane Gibson (landcrew Peter and Sam Gibson): Unfortunately things didn't go to plan. This was my 3rd Classic, first time in a ski and as a brand new member of LCRK. I was having a great paddle, travelling in front of where I thought I would be. Just before the Sackville ferry, I felt a little crook in the gut and pulled into Sackville for 5 minutes. I felt strong but couldn't eat anything. I changed into some warmer gear and took off. 20 minutes later I felt really sick so I pulled in at E, where I started getting cold and vomiting. Shivering, headache, stomach cramps, the works. I left E and got picked up an hour or so later by the SES, then spent another hour in a tent being treated for potential hypothermia and was home in bed by 1.30am. Until next time...



Bruce Goodall (landcrew Roger Deane): I wanted to break my own Open Long Rec record of 9.37 so I entered in the Open even though I could do the 40+. But I lost my sense of stability in the darkness and not being able to read the horizon threw me out, I was bracing on flat water. I have done a lot of night training on Parramatta River but there is ambient light there, not like the Hawkesbury. I have suffered from vertigo and by



Wisemans my right wrist was sore, possibly from tensing up. I was half an hour behind schedule at Wisemans and decided to pull out, partly because I knew I couldn't break the record and also because I knew I was going to go for a swim if I continued in the dark. I'm sick of doing the Classic in the dark, without a moon.

Dave Hammond/Tony D'Andreti (landcrew wife Maria Hammond, Robbie Nield): We were pretty pleased with our Classic. It was better than last time and a fraction better than our race plan. If only we could paddle the last 30km like the first 70km! They are hell and those "little demons" never seem to get any friendlier. We nearly missed the last CP. Imagine getting DQ'd after 98km. Unlike previous years, we did most of our training on the Lane Cove River. It does your head in, but is close to home, distraction-free, ferry and water skier-free, weather-free, which generally results in more quality sessions. If you don't get dizzy from all the laps, that is. Thanks to Paul van K for his enthusiastic rallying of the LCRK "Classic Team" and all the members who helped out on the day. It truly was a joy (sort of) to experience.



Tom Holloway (landcrew pregnant wife Trish and mother Marie): I paddled a medium rec I built from my old Burn. I paddled to Sackville with Bruce Goodall, Bob Turner and Nick Chai. I went too hard keeping up with Bruce and stopped briefly, and they kept going. After Sackville things went off the rails - I was paying for having gone out too hard. I struggled to Wisemans and was considering withdrawing, however my excellent landcrew put me back together and things came good from then on. The much-feared incoming tide was mild and came later than predicted, and I made up time over the final 40km, finishing with a 20-minute PB.



Tim Hookins (Tony Carr): The guy I had to beat to win the 60+ ORS1 class was very athletic looking and went whipping off into the distance from the start, and was 5 minutes ahead at Cattai. At Sackville I lost concentration and went for a swim in front of everyone. And nobody gave a damn. I was feeling really low and had some Nurofen, and that worried my landcrew, Tony. By the time I got to Wisemans I was feeling good and passed my opposition coming into the checkpoint. After leaving Wisemans I was feeling bloody and asked Richard Barnes where he got all his positive thoughts, because all mine were negative. He said to ask some other paddlers, and I did, and they all had positive thoughts. It was tough to the finish but I won my class.



Caron Jander (landcrew Michael Maitland): Well, in my 2nd Classic I managed to stay in the boat - I fell in twice last year. I washrode Okkie Esterhuizen the whole way. At one point after Wisemans we got behind an OC6 and were doing 14.8km/h - we couldn't hang on for long but it was brilliant. I found that putting meths on my hands for 3 weeks before the race and then vaseline at each checkpoint under my sailing gloves proved excellent. The help from Lane Cove support crews at Sackville and Wisemans was phenomenal.



Heather Kent (landcrew husband Kelvyn Steggles, Anne Powell): Having spent close to the national deficit in purchasing the new kayak and all the new toys/gadgets, apparel, etc one needs for this new sport of mine, I finished the bloody race! I



didn't get lost, I did have 2 altercations with the river bank when it was pitch black in the wee hours, I never want to see another banana again in my life, I do talk to myself and I am a really great singer between the hours of 2 and 5am, especially when on my own (although I did have some fellow paddlers joining in when they were near me). In my more lucid moments, I did find paddling down the river in the middle of the night in the blackness very beautiful and surreal.



Andrew Kucyper (landcrew son Mark): This was my 7th Classic. Downstream from Wisemans I went across to a cruiser with lots of lights which I thought was a checkpoint – but they were just fishing. I didn't realise the eddies close to this boat had rotated my kayak and started paddling again in the wrong direction. After a few hundred metres I saw some paddlers going in the opposite direction and when I checked my compass I realised I was going the wrong way. Further on I saw the silhouettes of two heads high above the hilly skyline. From the perspective of my kayak they looked like giants and when I went towards them I found two stand-up paddlers. When I spoke the second paddler, a woman, responded with an unusual happiness in her voice. What made her so happy? Two days after the Classic I got an answer. Her name was Neelie and she was paddling with her husband Ben. She had been diagnosed, the previous Wednesday, with throat cancer and was to go in for an operation on the first Friday after the Classic. The doctor diagnosis was a great surprise but as they were all set up for the Classic they decided to do it. Neelie is a real hero for me!



Anjie Lees (landcrew daughter Brianna, son Aaron): I felt good. Early on I washrode Meg and we had a feast of bugs. I got to Sackville on time and had a one-minute stop, then 15 minutes at Wisemans. I had a bit of a sore shoulder but Nurofen fixed that. Ruby left Wisemans before me but I caught her after the ferry and she washrode me to Spencer. She was the back-seat driver telling me where to go – it was pitch dark and I couldn't see my maps, and there were no boat lights ahead on the river. Around the corner from Spencer I went for a swim, I was waiting for Ruby to raft up to me so I could steady the boat and take some Nurofen, but she wasn't there. Just past checkpoint O a speedboat came straight at us, our cyalumes weren't working but he saw us at the last moment and swerved past with a big wash.



Ann Lloyd-Green (landcrew son Sam and his partner Sally): My previous Classics have been in a TK1, this time I borrowed a Horizon Tourer from James Farrell and it was very comfortable. For the first time I stopped at Sackville and changed my clothes. For me the race is mental, I have no muscle, I can't even lift the boat. Wisemans is always hard, my body wants to go to bed, tiredness is the worst problem. My right hand became sore, so I gripped the paddle with both hands and went for it for the last 4 hours and paddled faster than I did earlier.



Cathy Miller/Trevor Waters (landcrew Trevor Williamson): We paddled the trusty Mirage 730, Trevor opting for bare shoulders while I put on 2 layers, go figure. When I started to get visual distortions after Sackville I put it down to the annoying green glow from the cyalume light incorrectly masked on the front deck. It was only



after the race I realised I was starting to hallucinate, very early in the race! The problem as always was fixed by food, we had a thermos of rice cream with us in the ample day hatch of the Mirage (jealous, racers?). The mudlarks at Wisemans were marvellous. Trevor's strategy of using the back eddies on the opposite banks when against the tide from Wisemans down meant we took ¾hr off our race plan. That is 9 in the bag for Cathy, 2 for Trevor, so we will be back next year. If anyone wants to sell us a Sladecraft double, get in touch.



Kenji Ogawa (landcrew wife Gilda): I don't worry about my time, for me this is a once-a-year excursion-type paddle through the night. I was mostly by myself and quite enjoyed it, sometimes it was dark, sometimes there was a moon. I paddled a Flyer and after Wisemans my bum started to hurt. The kayak was leaning to the right because I was sitting on the edge of the seat and it was hard to keep straight because the left hand had to paddle harder. For the two previous years I was in my Pittarak and had no seat problems, I might revert to it again next year. This was my 19th Classic, next year will be 20.



Glen Orchard (William Pape): 5 minutes after the 5.30pm start I left the pack behind and was on my own for most of the race after that. The race was tough, with wind at the start for 2½ hours, then the outgoing tide didn't give much assistance. My maximum speed was 13km/h – last year I was doing 14 for hours. The GPS track which I loaded off our website was accurate and gave me a line which I followed all the way. I washrode a couple of doubles for 20 minutes coming into Pit Stop but had to stop there briefly to stretch and lost them. It was tough at the end, I was by myself and only doing 10½k's, the last 4 hours were hell on earth.



Bettina Otterbeck (landcrew Jorg Buchholz): I paddled with Ruby for the first half hour, stopped at Sackville for 20 minutes, and showered and had some soup in a 50-minute stop at Wisemans. At Pit Stop I stayed in the boat and they brought fantastic scones and mint slices out on a plater. I came into the finish earlier than expected and my landcrew was sleeping in the Land Cruiser, but Richard Barnes helped me. I found the race uneventful and easier than training. There were moments where I enjoyed the stars and sunset and sunrise, but for the most part it was just a case of doing the job.



Justin Paine (landcrew Paul Gibson, Jana Osvald): I struggled in the early wind and tide and couldn't manage any speed, and by darkness found myself battling towards the back of the field. I wasn't enjoying myself, despondent and alone in the dark, and coming into Sackville decided I would rather be on the bank having fun with the landcrews. So I handed in my number, got checked out in the medical tent where they discovered to my relief that I was still alive, and spent the rest of the night taking photographs of and encouraging a stream of fantastic LCRK paddlers.



Jonathan Peters (landcrew wife Wendy, son Michael, Greg Morris, Warwick Sherwood, Michael Venter): It was my first Classic and I had an OK race. I only took up paddling in February and was pleased to complete the race, I didn't know what to expect. 6 years ago I dislocated my shoulder and 6 weeks before the Classic I



dislocated it again which upset my training. At Sackville I had some physio treatment for it. I finished tired but didn't at any time hit the wall. Now I have set a time to beat next year.

Chris Quirk/Stuart Myers/David Goodie

(landcrew Mark Kenna, Craig Mason): Chris: We were nervous about the race for two reasons – firstly we didn't know whether our 3-seater ski, constructed out a single and a double, would last, and secondly Dave hadn't finished his last two Classics and didn't know how he would go. It's a tough race, a mental race, and you have to get your fluids and nutrition right. The trick is to turn the GPs off when you're into the tide, and turn it back on when the tide is with you. We expected to be first across the line from a BoB2 start, and we were. I came in 2nd the last two years in a single and a double from BoB starts. We hoped for an 8-plus hours time but did 9.16. The big bang for me was that my wife brought my young daughter Olivia down to the finish to greet me.



Paul Seaberg (landcrew Paulie's Angels – Marie Cahir, Sarah Collins, Sarah Dunning): My lower back and neck became a problem from 20km into the race and it was good to get a massage from the physio tent at Wisemans. After another 5km they started hurting again. Overall I had a pretty good race and had no real problems with the dark. Near Spencer I hung on to a channel marker and tried to phone my landcrew on my mobile and tell them I would not be stopping at Spencer. I dialled by voice recognition and woke up my surveyor at 4am – he wasn't happy. I had no coverage for my landcrew so ended up phoning my wife, who was coming to collect me, and she called the landcrew.



Derek Simmonds (landcrew Wade Rowston): The Classic was an on-again, off-again affair for me. I had injured my shoulder in two long paddles on the Myall and my GP advised against doing the race. However a specialist sports physician cleared me so I was able to compete. Thinking about withdrawing is worse than actually doing it. I had quite a lot of pain in my shoulder so took it easy and made it a social paddle. At Wisemans I took some anti-inflammatories and was OK. A call into Pit Stop was the highlight, Rob and Marg Cook were serving Devonshire tea and caramel slices. The suction of the mud there pulled the soles off my paddling booties.



Jeremy Spear (landcrew Craig Ryan): At the 6pm start I went out a bit quickly and was 3rd to the bridge behind the K4. My right wrist blew up after 20km, I didn't know why, it's never happened before. It was painful right through but my clothing, food and drink were all perfect. The tide ran 30 minutes behind schedule and that messed up my spreadsheet. I was 12 minutes behind schedule at Sackville, 20 minutes behind at Wisemans and 30 minutes behind at the end. My preparation went out the window when I had to go overseas and I started the race with jetlag, but that meant staying up through the night was not a problem!



Matt Swann (landcrew Bill McIntosh): The Classic is one of my favourite nights of the year, a party on the water. I started well with John

Duffy and Derek Simmonds, washriding and leapfrogging each other most of the way to Sackville. John took off but I caught him, I heard his music. At Wisemans I couldn't find my landcrew but everyone gathered around and was fantastic. Pit Stop was wonderful, they walk out in the mud with scones and jam. I had Tom Simmat's diagram of how to paddle the Big W but it didn't help, it was too dark to see the water. However, I followed his advice from Bar Point to the finish and it was excellent. It was my 8th Classic.



John Thearle/James Mumme (landcrew Liz Winn, Tery Lew): John: I thought the conditions were pretty good, not much wind, pretty flat, but not much moon. The GPS helped with the track in the dark. We had a fairly relaxed race. Our heart rates were too high for too long early but we had to do it to keep up with other Lane Covers like Phil and Paul, and Dave and Keg. Everything went pretty well to plan, not that we had a plan. My right wrist played up after Sackville so I took some painkillers and could put some weight on it. After Wisemans it was just a matter of plugging away and we scraped in just under 10½ hours.



Chris Thompson (landcrew Helen Thompson): Thanks for all the LCRK support on the Hawkesbury this year. Having opened a new business it was all that I could do to put in one long paddle as race prep. Not conditioned, in between Sackville and Wisemans I put some vaseline on my hands to relieve a nagging issue... lala land I was in, because as all the experts will know, for the next 20 minutes I was slipping and sliding around with my grip and my stroke. I had the pleasure of a long stint with Richard Barnes in his outrigger. I was lured into Pit Stop and enjoyed tea and scones – the fire was beyond words. Finally, although a long way from my PB, I finished, much to the relief of my trusty landcrew.



Jeff Tonazzi (landcrew wife Melanie, son Adam): My plan was to complete my first Classic in under 13 hours, with stops at Sackville, Wisemans and Low Tide. The 1st leg went well with a 90-minute washride behind Mark Sundin from Expedition Kayaks, arriving 20 mins ahead of schedule at Sackville. The 2nd leg to Wisemans was all alone in the dark, but arriving 45 mins up. LCRK encouragement and family support got me right to push on to the finish. The 3rd leg went well with a wash behind a double for over an hour before they stopped, with a lady at the back vomiting. Over the last 30 minutes I pushed to crack the 12 hour mark, which I did by 70 seconds. Next year's plans are under way already. Can't wait to be a part of a great club, and do it all again.



Bob Turner (landcrew Carmen Cooper): Due to overseas business travel, my total preparation amounted to 3 x 20km, 2 x 30km, and 1 x 40km paddle in the 6-8 weeks beforehand. I took delivery of a new Sladecraft SLR1 on Wednesday afternoon before the race but put my back out unloading it, and didn't get to sit in it until Friday morning, when I was able only to do a 500 metre paddle! After the start I found myself slogging into the tide with Tom Holloway and Nick Chai, who were both on a good pace. At Wisemans the Service was, as always, EXCEPTIONAL. Carmen Cooper took great care



of me, once two very muddy individuals managed to extract me from the boat, and Tony Hystek encouraged me to do some stretching which proved invaluable later on. Some very dedicated Club members even washed the mud off my feet before pushing me off into the darkness again. I slugged it out to the finish and arrived at Brooklyn in 10:07:17, 2 minutes short of James Mummies' 2008 LREC record (much to his relief).

David Young (landcrew wife Gloria, daughter Jessica): I am a member of North Curl Curl Surf Club and four of us who were preparing for the

masters surf life saving series decided to do the Classic as part of our training. The other 3 pulled out, and out of desperation for motivation I joined Lane Cove. As my training went on my expectation for the Classic dropped from 14 hours to 12 and then 11½. I thought if I can do 11+ I would be happy and under 11 ecstatic. A lot of things went wrong in the race, including eating and drinking. My back played up from Wisemans but I can't complain, I learned a lot and I'm ready for next year. And I did 10.59.35, so I'm ecstatic!



Tony Carr gets a photo of Rae Duffy, Bettina and a friend at Windsor



Andrew McKay's BBQ at the Wisemans checkpoint was extremely popular



David Hammond at the start



Carmen and Jason Cooper



Craig Ellis



David Young reaches the finish



Kenji Ogawa ... 19th Classic



Meg Thornton — still smiling after an impromptu swim at the Wisemans checkpoint



Richard Barnes and his OC1

Classic pictures mostly by Jana Osvold and Justin Paine



Hawkesbury Classic Awards Presentation Night: Jeremy Spear, class win; Ann Lloyd-Green, class win and record; Derek Simmonds, certificate for 15th Classic; Rae Duffy, certificate for 5th Classic. Photos by Wade Rowston.



Nick Chai said he had trouble finding his way in the dark



Justin Paine and Neil Duffy chat after withdrawing at Sackville



Andrew Kucyper ... swung around by eddies and paddled the wrong way

Amazing endurance

Four Lane Covers produced some phenomenal endurance performances at Burley Griffin Canoe Club's 24-hour Challenge in late November. Richard Barnes did not get out of his Mirage 580 at all during the 24 hours he paddled 49 laps of the 4km course – 196km. Anjie Lees paddled 160km (40 laps) in 24 hours with occasional breaks. Tony Hystek and Richard Robinson in a double used the event as a shakedown for the Devizes to Westminster race in England next year and portaged most of their 41 laps (164km) in 18 hours. Anjie is writing a special report on the race for the next issue of *Kayak Kapers*.



A new generation of LCRK paddlers has arrived. Congratulations to Tom and Trish Holloway on the birth of their first child, a son, at 3am on Nov 26. They haven't made a final decision yet on his name.



Richard Robinson introduced his 8½-year-old son Guy to sprint racing – he's a champion in the making

Annual Christmas BBQ and Santa Sprint Regatta

Wednesday, December 18, from 6pm

**Novelty races, free canoe rides for kids of all ages
Water pistols and water bombs permitted**

**Get into the Christmas spirit,
dress up in your Santa costume**

There will also be the presentation of annual excellence awards – the Crudlime and Coffee Cups and awards for the Most Improved and Rookie of the Year

Sprint Series Round 3 Nov 17

1000m. Race 1: Ella Beere 8.40.1 3; Race 2: Alanna Ewin/Tony Hystek 4.37.9 1, Joy Robinson 5.41.5 6, Ruby Gamble 5.55.0 7; Race 3: Guy and Richard Robinson 5.46.4 1, Tim Hookins 5.27.7 2, Derek Simmonds 5.37.1 5; Race 6: Tony Hystek/Richard Robinson 4.05.9 1, Michael Day 4.32.9 5.
500m. Final F: Joy Robinson 2.48.8 6, Ruby Gamble 2.54.5 7, Ella Beere 3.03.4 8; Final E: Tim Hookins 2.32.5 2, Derek Simmonds 2.41.7 7; Final B: Richard Robinson 2.04.3 4, Michael Day 2.10.2 7, Tony Hystek 2.12.7 9. Heat 1: Guy Robinson 3.44.2 6; Heat 5: Craig Ellis 2.24.2 3.
200m. Final G: Guy Robinson 1.28.6 4; Final F: Derek Simmonds 1.04.5 2, Ella Beere 1.07.3 6, Joy Robinson 1.07.9 7, Ruby Gamble 1.11.9 8; Final E: Tim Hookins 58.2 1; Final C: Michael Day 49.7 1, Tony Hystek 50.9 4, Craig Ellis 51.5 5; Final B: Richard Robinson 48.5 7.

Two LCRK members did interesting rebuilds to convert their craft into something different for this year's Hawkesbury Classic.

1. The trick was getting the joins right

by Chris Quirk

About 3 years ago, with 5 mins quiet time at work (that was the last quiet time) I browsed through Surfski Info. I was amused by an article by a guy in SA, "T- Bone", for obvious reasons. In brief, he T-boned his new Fenn Elite double, cried for a bit and then decided to join it back together but to add a 3rd seat at the join. Great idea, I thought.

He went on to say that after a test paddle in flat water they decided to try it in open water, which went fairly well except that the guy in the middle often spent several minutes at a time submerged to his head in water! Quiet time over, I gave it no further thought until ...

The following night sitting with the kids in the pool I was recounting the vision of this poor joker in the middle up to his neck in water. At the same time I was looking at my good friend's carbon Double Fenn Millennium hanging under my decking, where I had offered to house it.

The ski that had spent more time upside down in the previous year's HCC and that had not and likely would never go on the water again. As it turned out my second ski, also unlikely to ever be paddled again, was a Fenn Millennium single - arguably the fastest ski on the water, arguably the most unstable ski on the water, and (NOT arguably) the MOST uncomfortable ski ever made.

Well, you guessed it, the penny dropped, the light bulb flashed on, the idea was born.

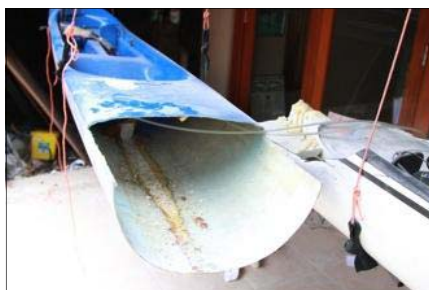
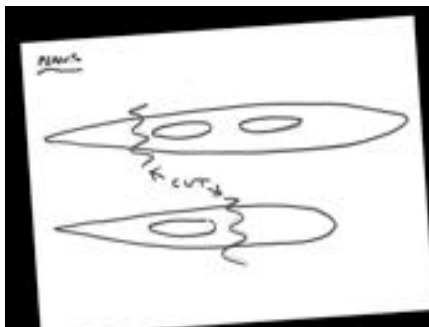
As I mentioned, that was 3 years ago, and yes, the wheels turn very slowly in my house; as you know life with kids is busy. Indeed the impetus for doing it this year was partly based on the poor forecast for a good time in this year's HCC, and partly to get a mate to the finish line after having faltered the 2 previous years.

Then there was the negotiating with the owners about cutting their ski in half and of course - how the hell do we do this?

My thoughts went from just cutting the front of the single, the back of the double, to cutting the double in the middle and slap the seat of the single in between and whack some gaffe tape on, to cutting all the seats out and just squeezing 3 seats into the same length etc etc.

Although they are both Millennium skis, let me tell you, there is absolutely no similarity in width, breadth, depth, profile etc anywhere along the length of either boat!! One is glass, the other carbon. As you probably gather, I am neither a boat builder nor an engineer,

so the logistics of getting a 9½m-long, 40cm-wide boat not to break, and getting some degree of uniformity to the hull profile, was going to be a major challenge.



Anyway, as you can see attached, a comprehensive plan was drawn up (patent awaited), got a grinder out and went for it. The rest is a blur. Apart from trying to get the profiles to match at least a little bit at the join, getting the alignment, twist, rocker etc straight was also a challenge.

Do I get laser pointers, build a frame, use string? In the end, during a Sunday afternoon BBQ, with the cut skis hanging from the decking, I asked a friend to look along the length, eyeball it, and when he said "looks ok", bingo 2 holding rivets, all done, on to the 4th beer! The Egyptians didn't have modern technology, and they didn't do too badly, so what could go wrong?

From then on, after a trip to Mr Carbon supplier with the trusted Mastercard, it was just a case of whacking on the carbon (using epoxy resin, much stronger, but a bit temperamental on those slightly colder nights) and then whacking on more carbon till it looked a bit stronger, properly tested using accepted engineering techniques like looking at it and pushing the ends to see if it flexes.

Stage one complete, test "sit-in" in the pool. Hmm, flexes a bit, maybe joining a glass ski to carbon not such a good idea. Back to Mr Carbon, credit card out again, more epoxy and lots more carbon. Eventually might be time to have a test paddle down at Woodford Bay. Hurray, it didn't sink, it felt fast, stability (one of my major concerns, to the extent I had planned to put stabilisers on the sides) was actually brilliant. OK, one week to the Myall Classic, we might just make it. Perhaps not, how the hell do we get it there?

Well, it got there; it floated and almost went well. No venturies in the foot wells, multiple holes in the hull, so filled up with a 'Guestimate' 10 L, and leg length for paddler No 2 that was too short such that he had to have his feet up on the deck most of time. Back to Mr Carbon, back to grinder and back to work. Would it make it to the HCC start, would it make it to Windsor Bridge, would we make it all the way? Nervous days.

The rest is history. We made it, albeit very uncomfortable most of the way. What now, nowhere to store *The Beast*, difficulty getting it to the water to paddle, uncomfortable, the list goes on. The best option is to take it in an open-water race, maybe Bridge to Beach next year (they are used to rescues after last year!) and if it breaks up, so be it.

If it doesn't a serious option is some foils (this time definitely properly engineered and designed) and next years HCC in 4 hours?

2. Another Tom Builds a Boat

by Tom Holloway

I paddled the LCRK Flash – the *Frank McDonald* – in last year's Classic and I really enjoyed* it. I decided to paddle medium rec again this year, however John Duffy was paddling *Frank* (and did very well!), so I needed another option. Phil Newman and Tim Dodd kindly offered their Flashes, however in the end I decided to modify my old Burn – a wide K1 – to fit medium rec class.

Here's an outline of how I converted it:

1. Cut plywood templates with a jigsaw and attach them to the sides of the boat. See figure.
2. Pour two-part expanding foam between the templates and hull.
3. Saw the hardened foam with a knife, using the templates and hull as a guide.
4. Remove the templates, and fill the gap with more foam.
5. Rough sand the foam into final shape
6. Coat the foam with fibreglass and polyester resin
7. Touch up with bog
8. Sand
9. Paint
10. Decorate with black line and sticker

Once the "Burn X" conversion was complete, the question was: how was it going to perform? I initially tested it on Wednesday nights and it came out around 30-60 seconds slower in its modified state, due to 1.9kg additional weight, and the slightly wider waterline. This was a good result, as I'd feared it may have been much slower. The speed and performance turned out similar to a Flash, which is unsurprising given both are built to the same measuring box dimensions, and have similar waterline length (5.2m vs 5.3m).

Next up were the Hawkesbury famils. We encountered a lot of wind swell and speedboat wash in these events, and the enhanced secondary stability really helped, giving me confidence that it would be a good Hawkesbury boat.

Then came the big event itself. First up was scrutineering. I knew the boat complied, I'd even had it pre-scrutineered. However I was still nervous about official scrutineering on the day and was expecting a thorough going over. I put the boat on the stands, had my safety equipment ticked off, and awaited measurement. The boss asked "Does it fit medium rec class?" "Yes, it fits," I answered. "OK, I believe you" he replied and he waved me straight on through! Quite an anticlimax!

It was a great boat in the Hawkesbury Classic, with excellent speed for a medium rec, and enough stability that I didn't have to worry about falling out (as I did in the 2010 Classic), even when fumbling for a torch or food.

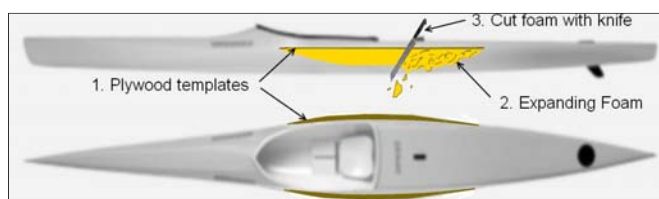
I managed 10:25, vs 10:44 in the Flash the year before. I

was hoping to do 10:15, however I overdid it at the start, spent 30 minutes out of the boat in total, and stopped at three ferries. If I had a really strong race I could probably go under 10 hours in a good year, and a good paddler could go much faster than that. I'll probably paddle it again next year and see how I do.

The alterations are largely reversible, as the foam can be removed cleanly from the gelcoat with a scraper. I originally planned to change it back, however I quite like how it turned out, and having 2 K1s and a medium rec probably makes more sense than 3 K1s!

I enjoyed tinkering with this boat. If you're handy and looking for a project then have a go at building or modifying a boat. It can be a bit time consuming and messy though. As Tom Simmat's current wife said to mine: "Oh dear, he hasn't started building boats, has he?"

* Relatively speaking. Only Richard Barnes actually enjoys the Classic.



How many strokes to paddle the Hawkesbury Classic?

by Justin Paine

One of the most common questions around Hawkesbury Classic time is: how many strokes does it take to paddle the Classic?

Obviously it will not be the same for everybody, but to try and get a rough idea I conducted an experiment. I paddled a kilometre and counted the number of strokes it took. Originally I counted one stroke as a left and a right, but as common practice seems to be one stroke is every time the paddle enters the water I have accepted that, and it is reflected in the following calculations.

I took 446 strokes for the kilo and multiplying that out to do 100km, which is about the real actual distance of the Classic, I came up with 44,600 strokes to do the race at that pace. Each stroke moves the boat forward by about 2/4 metres.

I invited members to estimate the number of strokes they would take for the Classic, with the following responses.

Glen Orchard: I did a quick calc and I estimate that at Classic speed I would do 80 to 84 strokes per minute. If I extrapolate this to the Classic (80 strokes/min) I had 8h 45m of moving time, this equals 44,100 strokes or 2.268 metres per stroke.

Jeremy Spear: I paddle at 72 strokes a minute (usually, give or take). I spent 10h 6m actually paddling in the Classic, the rest was in pit stops. 606 minutes of paddling x 72 spm = 43,632 strokes...more or less. Check out Dr Tim Brabants

training with Ben Brown. http://youtu.be/6Nr9_UxHHpg. Looks to me he gets around 100 strokes in 52 secs which is 1.92 single strokes per second which is a stroke rate of 115 towards the end when he's going pretty flat out. Carter Johnson rates at 94 single strokes per min in a relaxed training session with also some very good slo mo on <http://www.paddlerpix.com/Sports/1110-Video-Session-Wavechaser/i-CMmLHM9>.

Derek Simmonds: In the Classic I paddled next to a very mathematical fellow who estimated 44,000 strokes, so sounds like your estimate is similar.

Anjie Lees: I paddle with a metronome set to 90 beats per minute. It took me 12h 38min to do the Classic. Take out 20min stops. 12 hours 18min = 738 min x 90bpm = 66,420 strokes. Give or take a few.

Martin Dearnley: Most experienced kayak paddlers rate at 70-80 strokes per minute over 12km on a Wednesday night. In the Classic, an experienced paddler should spend around 10.5 hours (or 630 minutes) actually paddling on the river and their cadence will be slower than for a Wednesday night. So allowing (say) 72 strokes per minute over (say) 630 minutes, then the Classic should take around 45,000 paddle strokes.

Jana Osvold asked an interesting question: I wonder if a faster paddler does less strokes or more? Perhaps we can seek opinions on that in a future issue of *Kayak Kapers*.

Tim Hookins' plans to paddle the famous Fish River Marathon in South Africa with Tony Hystek crashed when a badly septic toe put Tony in hospital. Tim went with wife Judy anyhow, hoping to find a paddling partner on the spot. This is his account of what happened.

Chutes, weirs and rapids in the Fish Marathon

by Tim Hookins

I arrived at East London without a paddling partner in a year allocated to doing the Fish in a K2 and had resigned myself to doing it in a K1. On the day Jude and I were scheduled to leave for Cradock where the Fish is held I had a call from a plaintive paddler who had just hurt his back towards the end of a golf swing! I gleefully accepted position number 2 in a K3. I was to meet my paddling partners at the race.



Reinard and Louis were resolutely committed to not training and for good measure to not preparing either. But Reinard said we could do all the training we needed across the 3km of the dam. As luck would have it on the morning of the start there was an unprecedented gale howling across the dam and all but the most skilled ocean paddlers were being swamped. In the end the rescue craft were overwhelmed and the organisers were forced to substitute the chase across the dam for a 3½km portage!

But before we could start Reinard and I had to find our third paddler. Eventually he appeared, forty five minutes before the start with the cast-iron excuse that he had been watching the earlier starters struggling across the hillside doing the portage.

We swapped names and I discovered that our third speaks good Afrikaans but as Reinard later commented, you wouldn't have him supervise your kid's English homework. So I discovered that the preferred language of communication on the K3 was to be Afrikaans and I better brush up on mine!

We then discovered (15 minutes before our start) that Louis' seat was wrong and that the bolts were rusted solid. Some frantic borrowing of parts and equipment got that sorted just in time for us to have the honour of being the very last boat in the race to start. As Reinard commented, things could only get better!

Louis and Reinard were carrying the heavy old K3 and I, because of my age seniority, carried the paddles, but they were going so quickly I could barely keep up. After two kilometres of trekking across the rocky bushveld I thought I should at least make the offer to carry the K3. To my horror Reinard accepted and there I was carrying a K3 across the rocky countryside. "How could this have occurred?" I thought. "I haven't even walked 500m for years!"

Before I knew it we were behind the dam wall and we were putting in on the fast flowing but relatively smooth water. This was to be our "training" but after 400m we encountered the first rapid and our training was over. We were OK but it became clear that Louis' spray deck did not fit and we were taking on water at each rapid. Then came "Double Trouble", a steep chute, a 5m flat turn, another chute and a sharp turn at the bottom. We raced down the chutes but were a bit weak on the

bottom turn. Reinard shouted to a guy at the bottom to give us a kick. He obliged and the big K3 turned in time to avert disaster.

Celebrations! We looked to be OK. We could now start considering doing the "Toastrack". Reinard said "No, we shouldn't in the K3" but before we knew it, there was Toastrack and another K3 right in front of us was doing it. It was too much of a temptation to Reinard and seconds later we were streaking through the slots of the Toastrack which were narrower than I remembered. About a metre wide and headroom about two feet. This is a clear invitation to duck however tight your hamstrings may be. But again we were through and things were looking good.

In fact it seemed an appropriate moment for introductions! I discovered that my two paddling partners had flown down from Johannesburg the night before, that Reinard had done 12 Fishes before and the muscly Louis had done 3, but had not been in a boat since the Fish last year. But if he was not on the water with us, he would be at his desk, so the paddling was without doubt the preferred option. Amazing! Then it became clear the boat was sinking. It had to be either Louis' spray deck or a hole.

We beached in a sunny glen and during the investigation I stood on a thorn that went right through my boot and into my foot. We fixed the hole with miles of duct tape and were soon away.

We all commented as to how conversation dries up when you have a challenge before you. Saltpan Rapid was ahead and we were keen to shoot it well. However fate had different plans for us. The small weir just before caught us unawares and we swam and had to empty the boat.

But we approached Saltpan with determination and shot through the beginning and all the way down through several stoppers. Just as we started celebrating we hit a large stopper and that sent us sprawling. I am amazed at how quickly we were able to recover, get everyone's blades in the right hands, spray decks on and on our way.

We were beginning to see our potential. And all our mishaps were being blamed fairly and squarely on Australia. The Springboks/Wallabies game was to be the next night and I was assured retribution would take place then.

At last the finish came into view, my land crew, Jude was there with towel and clothes and we warmed up and

had the food these good country people lay on for all the 1400 odd paddlers that participate.

It's so good to finish day 1 of this race and to relax, sleep, and tend to ones wounds.

Next morning saw us driving across the dusty Karoo semi-desert to ready for the start. Reinard commented that overnight the lads had been hard at work repairing the boat and it looked so good he had revised his intention of throwing this seriously





battered boat away after this race. Maybe one more Fish, he said. Apparently he says this every year.

We had been promoted one batch and had overtaken about 40 boats the day before. We got off to a splendid start thinking this was the day it would all come together. Going through medium size rapids in a K3 is great fun and our spirits continued to soar as we went over Gauging Weir with no problems whatsoever. Reinard casually mentioned that last year the girl paddling no. 2 had dislocated her shoulder on the weir. He had pulled her up by the arm, not knowing that it was dislocated. Shoulder dislocations are quite a common injury on the Fish.

As we went under a bridge I saw Jude and shouted out "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie!" Louis at the back immediately reprimanded me, saying the crowds would throw stones at us if we said that. It was after all the day of the Springboks/Wallabies game!

Then came Marlowe chute which we were planning to do really well. But fate had it that we were pitched out of the boat again. The only comfort was that we were surrounded by other boats all clambering around getting back in, finding their paddles. That dented our confidence a bit, even though we had overtaken many boats and our rhythm was well and truly there.

Again silence and a reprieve from the friendly Aussiebashing from Louis behind as we came up to the famed Cradock weir. We had everything right as we went over but somehow we swam once again. In a K3 the front man is projected out over the crashing water. Undaunted we were on our way, still enjoying the rolling rapids.

However a moment's lapse in concentration put us under the bamboos which hang a foot or so over the left bank. As if to punish us they went whacking over our three heads like machine gun fire and of course before you knew it we were in again.

This took us down a few pegs. Reinard was cursing and Louis and I were making weak excuses as to why this could have occurred but once again we picked ourselves up, got back in and next thing we were across the finishing line, collecting our medals and our Hansa beers. We were now a team ready to do a Fish!

A trip to the Fish is not complete without a visit to the Addo Elephant Game Reserve and early the next morning we set out for Addo. First stop at about 8 am was a coffee spot which revels in the name of Daggaboer (translation marijuana farmer) By late afternoon we were at the game reserve ready to observe the animals at close quarters. But not that close! Our car was stopped as a herd of elephants



The puffadder

sauntered across the road. **Tim Hookins was sandwiched in between Reinard and the muscly Louis in their K3**

One big fella, ears flapping, made for us and stopped a metre in front of the car. We stopped the engine and waited for the next move, both of us fairly paralysed with fear, though I managed to get a picture or two. For about five minutes he stood right by us looking into the car, a bit like Jurassic Park. That was enough of elephants for that day.

We loved the game park and I wanted to see a puffadder which is a common snake there. I saw many as a kid but none was to be found that day.

A few days later we were up at a Hogsback, a mountain resort in the Amatola Mountains. Jude and I followed a school excursion down the steep hillside to the "Madonna and Child" waterfall.

There the kids were frolicking in the pool at the bottom of the falls and of course when it was time to leave they were reluctant. That is until the shout went up that there was a puffadder trying to share the pool with them. No quicker way of clearing a swimming area than that! I got to see my puffadder as you can see. Big, fat and fairly poisonous. But if you get a bite, you have 4 hours before you die.



"One big fella, ears flapping, made for us"

Boatshed closer to reality

by Jeremy Spear

LCRK has now received both a DA (Development Application) and a CC (Construction Certificate) from Willoughby City Council. This means we are inching closer to the reality of having an on-site dedicated storage facility for 20-30 kayaks. We have obtained quotations for the works and are refining these. Tom Simmat has done a huge amount of work with me in obtaining these approvals.



We have also submitted an application for some funding to assist the project, through the NSW Dept of Sport and Recreation. The remainder of funds required to construct the building will be from LCRK funds. These are the funds generated by the members paddling and attending the monthly BBQ and by hosting events.

We look forward to having juniors boats stored on-site, so coaching sessions can occur. Similarly, we look forward to seeing the K4 being used more often, especially in summer, as access and proximity will help make this easier for all to use it.

There will be boat-rack slots available for use, in return for a fee (this could also be handy if your partner doesn't need to know exactly how many boats you have...). There will be more club boats available so you can try out other kayaks and can also bring friends.

One of the main benefits will be that prospective members and new paddlers can arrange to use a club boat and be escorted on the river so they can "try before they buy" and can then go on to hire club boats, in order to assist funding.

To make our funds go as far as possible we intend using a bit of general club labour during the build and for fitting out the shed. Please keep an ear out for the call for work sessions when they occur and assist where you can.

We are very grateful to the assistance from Willoughby Council and the support in general from our neighbours and other park users. Let's remain courteous to the other users and be considerate with our parking.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Learning to paddle a K1

There is a minor error in the last *Kayak Kapers*. In the NSW Marathon Championships I was in the K1 division, not UN1.

Out of interest, way back in 2008 I set myself a target. I was then 60 and was wondering if at that age I could teach myself to balance in a K1 and be competitive. I ordered and picked up my Viper on the way to the national marathon championships on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. It was a bit choppy, I did not fall in but came last.

The next year was the world masters games, still very uncomfortable in the boat and was not really competitive in marathon or sprints. In the same year 2009 I loaded the Viper up with ballast, about five kilos, and managed to finish the HCC in 11 hours. This was all before the more stable Nelo and Vadja K1s were around.

I soon noticed that the guys paddling in the vet 60+ K1s had been paddling K1s since they were in their 30s. I had a long way to catch up. Also they paddled K1s all the time. I was making the mistake of swapping between K1 paddling and ski paddling.

I learned that to get anywhere in the K1 I had to be much more aggressive. Every stroke is a balance stroke and you needed a wider range of muscle groups and I needed my head in the right place.

Recently I have been focussing more on the K1, even in the dark on Wednesday night. At this year's NSW marathon championships the combined Vet 60 and Vet 65 was one of the biggest fields of 10 paddlers. All the old rivals were there.

So finally being very aggressive I managed to put it together, a lot of aggressive padding and with only a few emergency brace strokes I managed to open up a lead and hold it to the end, beating both vet 60 and 65 divisions.

So you can teach an old dog new tricks.

– Tom Simmat

Kayak Kapers welcomes the opportunity to not only correct the error but also publish such an interesting story. For those who are statistically minded, the letter of correction is 461 times longer than the original error. – Ed.

Nature Notes

by Jon Harris



Jellyfish:

Species – Cnidaria, Class – Scyphozoa, Medusae

Jellyfish have been on earth since long before the dinosaurs, almost unchanged. They are a group of invertebrate animals made up of glutinous material that have no brain, no lungs, no blood and no nervous system. Evident in our waterways at all times but particularly in September/October when they "bloom" or swarm in their millions after hatching, these blooms can be so numerous that they adversely affect the marine food chain. Most jellyfish species live less than a year, some only a few hours. The giants live much longer.

When the jellyfish reaches the Medusa stage of development (ie bell-shaped dome and long trailing tentacles), the male and female reproduce to spawn millions of larvae which settle on the bottom rocks and debris and look like miniature anemone polyps, linked by a feeding tube which is a common stomach. These polyps release baby jellyfish for several years, and they become medusae that then reproduce asexually. Some species reproduce by fission, ie they split in half, and each half becomes a new jellyfish.

The world population is thought to be increasing, due to climatic and sea environment changes, overfishing of predator species, increased nutrient and breeding habitat caused by urban development, and so on. Although strictly speaking they are non-swimmers, many species can pulsate the dome to draw in water and squirt it rearwards, propelling themselves forward.

The stinging tentacles are used to stun prey such as small fish and other tiny marine animals. The tentacles then guide the food into the mouth opening, where it is digested in a simple stomach and the waste expelled through the same opening.

Some have very primitive eyes to distinguish light from dark and are able to sense the presence of prey and predators. The Box-jellyfish actually has 24 eyes, of which 2 pairs can see in colour!

There are about 200 species of jellyfish, all radially symmetrical and closely related to corals, anemones and hydroids. Fortunately the type we mostly see in Lane Cove River are harmless, but others can inflict serious injury and death. One such is the Box-jelly or Irukandji or Sea-wasp, found in our far-northern waters. There are recent reports of these moving as far south as Hervey Bay, and one individual at Fraser Island.

The largest known jellyfish is the Lion's Mane which has a dome up to 2m high and tentacles 36.5m long, weighing up to 200kg.

Brush up on your first aid – you never know when you may get stung in Lane Cove River, or walking on the beach.



Lane Cove River Kayakers
PO Box 163 Lane Cove 1595
rowsto@tpg.com.au
0421-978-033 www.lcrk.org.au
President: Wade Rowston
Vice-President: Tom Holloway
Secretary: Paul van Koesveld
Treasurer: Phil Geddes
Committee members: Jon Harris, Derek Simmonds, Anjie Lees, Duncan Johnstone
Kayak Kapers Editor: Justin Paine 9858-3323