



Edition 34 – September 2009

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The DragonBoat SA Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 19th August where I was re-elected as President, Julie Clinch as Vice-President Female, Jennifer Bould as Treasurer and Steve Clinch as Committee Member. At a Board meeting on August 18th, Rod McGuinness had resigned as Vice-President Male and as this position was not up for election at the AGM, the board appointed Rick French to fill the casual vacancy. Patrick Doogue had shown interest in joining the Board and accepted one of the two Board appointed positions – the other position remains vacant.



The Board composition is now –

- John Holland – President
- Julie Clinch – Vice-President Female
- Rick French – Vice-President Male
- Christine Wood – Secretary
- Jennifer Bould – Treasurer
- Steve Clinch – Committee
- Patrick Doogue – Committee
- Sue Stoddard – Committee

The racing program has been confirmed, Clubs allocated race days and all is in readiness for another excellent season which will culminate in the Australian National Championships on the new A M Ramsay Course next April. This year we have introduced a \$5.00 charge per head for race days which will make it even more important for club members to confirm availability with their club well prior to race day because these race fees will be due with the entries.

A unique opportunity to race in Wallaroo has arisen at the Copper Cove Marina Festival on Saturday 24th October. Firm details will become available over the next 3 weeks but I can confirm that sponsorship of \$800 will be utilised as prize money – categories and split is still to be confirmed.

We are now starting to seek volunteers for the Nationals next year and if you won't be racing with your club, please consider helping to run what should be, the best Nationals yet. Please email me at johnholland@senet.com.au if you wish to be included on the volunteer register and if you have any queries, phone me on 0412356616.

Several of our clubs have already started racing for the season at the Mildura Masters Games which was organised by DBSA.

This was the first time for Dragon Boating at these games and was a huge success – we have definitely been invited to help out with the next games in 2011.

When using the new rowing course during training please be aware of other users – we had a collision recently and do not want a repeat. We will shortly have a protocol published on the use of the course but until then, please take extra care.

As we gear up for the new season and the training area becomes more congested, please be aware of common courtesies and treat others as you wish to be treated yourselves.

All the best for the year ahead.

John Holland
President - DBSA.

MILDURA DRAGON BOAT CLUB

The following article was written by Sandra Curr who is a member of the Mildura Dragon Boat Club. This club has been formed for less than a year and the Mildura Masters Games was their very first competition.

Dragons are Forever.

I woke in the morning full of trepidation. I'd never been in any race in my life. Sport was something I'd avoided like the plague and yet here I was, waking to a day devoted to racing. I had packed a change of clothes and a bit of food the night before. I took water and juice from the fridge and put that in the cooler bag with the apples and some dry biscuits. I tried to eat breakfast but my stomach was in a knot, so gave that up and settled for some of the dry biscuits instead.

I arrived at the river and sat in the car for a moment. I hoped I wouldn't let the team down, but then again, I decided we were all in the same boat – literally – and to just get on with it.

On the lawns the tent was already set up with other groups bustling around getting organized just like us. I had the feeling though that they probably had a little less bustle and were tad more 'organized' than us but it was to be our first race meeting. We didn't really have much of a clue but were giving it our best shot. I had had visions of us being the stuff movies are made of, a combination of the Keystone Cops meets the Jamaican Bobsled Team but they both came through at the end.

Slowly we gathered and hoped someone knew what we were supposed to do. We were there, resplendent in our red T-shirts and black pants.

Some of us got a good deal from the same Op Shop

and sported matching Pooncarie Races logos while others had a variety of sporting or commercial badges, embroidered or melted onto their shirts. Some had even borrowed school shirts from their children. It didn't matter, they were all red, and even if they weren't, we were a team. As we milled around waiting to be told what to do we watched the other teams doing the same, but in a slightly more ordered fashion. They arrived in their immaculate and colour coordinated livery, carrying their fibre carbon, or was that fibreglass, carbon fibre, hydrocarbon or fluorocarbon paddles whichever it was, they appeared so light they almost flapped in the breeze.

Suddenly it was time to get ready for the first race. Once we'd worked out who was in, we paraded to the riverbank ready to board the boat. Before hand we had been down to look at the sleek, fibreglass vessels which were to carry us to victory. Stage one over, we were all sitting in our respective places in the boat, looking very professional and still at the dock. Next came the tricky bit, paddling.

With heart pounding and the adrenaline pumping, we pushed off and almost in unison, stroked our way onto the river. No-one hit anyone else's paddle, no-one accidentally flicked water over anyone and best of all, no-one fell in. All in all, not a bad start. Time to line up for the first race. Jonathan had told us to 'intimidate' the other teams by being 'snappy' with our movements and so get a psychological head start at the line up. He also told us to keep changing our game plan to keep them guessing. It must have worked because our 'game plan' even kept us guessing. But I don't think 'intimidate' actually entered anyone's head, we were far too busy trying to follow directions and not tip over, and this was just to get into place.

Sitting, waiting, repositioning the boat, forward two strokes, back three strokes, bracing, braking, anticipating the gun. Bang! We were off. The drum beat, the paddles dug, the water sprayed, the sweep yelled, the drummer drummed and finally, YES, HORRAY, we'd completed our first race. It didn't matter that the other two boats were sitting waiting patiently for us to join them. They were just about to break out the tea and bikkies to fill in the time, but we fooled them. We finished before the kettle had time to boil.

It didn't matter. We did it. Mildura Dragons had just raced their first race in the history of Dragon Boat Racing in Mildura. We were trend setters, dynamos, the makers of history. The two teams waiting cheered –I thought it was just because we had finally finished and they were astounded by our ability and dexterity, but it turns out we all cheer each other at every race- but we glowed with pride anyway. My first race in my entire life and we came third. Woo hoo! After that we were unstoppable. We dressed up, sat up, lined up and paddled up, like the pros we now were. Race after race, siren after siren, we were there. In every race the drummer drummed her little heart out, shouting out the counts, the

sweep roared encouragement from behind and we paddled like there was no tomorrow. Not once did we tip over. A few times the clank of hitting paddles could be heard and I think at some stage each of us got a tad damp from an enthusiastic back sweep, but were on a roll.

What a brilliant day. What a great group of people, both within our own team and others as well. The blokes from Geelong joined us on several occasions to help out with numbers and we almost fell over laughing when one asked for 'our game plan'. As I said earlier, Jonathan had said to confuse the opposition. Well we were by now excelling at that. Our game plan was to get to the other end without falling out. How simple could it be? They also informed us that the middle of the boat was the 'engine' and the strongest should go there. Of course we put them there straight away and that was even before they told us that they train 3 nights a week at the gym and one on the water. I don't know if anyone was game to tell them that we casually arrive at the river once a week for an hour or so depending on how people feel and spend 15 minutes finding partners and getting into the boat. We didn't need to mention also, that we do it for fun. They were great blokes, lovely, friendly people as well as 'very good engines'. We could almost have sat back with our feet up but thought that might be taking an advantage to the extreme.

The day was cut short by the strength of the wind. Just lining up was becoming problematic, with one boat in place and another blown off course and having to line up again, by this time one of the others was out of line. The decision was made for one last race, 50+ Mixed. I for one was not sorry for the shortened program. Like many others, I was tired. Even so, when that gun went off, we paddled our tired little hearts out. We'd entered many races and in some we didn't come last. We worked fantastically as a team. We'd done it.

Considering it was our very first race meeting, with some people getting into the boat for the first time ever on the day –well done to you- and only the second or third time for others- well done to you too- we did extremely well. We even came away with several silver and bronze medals. One silver medal was of course, for coming second. We won't tell anyone that there were only two boats in that race. It still looked the same and felt the same around our neck as all the rest.

What a great day. What great organization by the coordinators of the games and particularly the coordinators of Mildura Dragons.

I think we all went home feeling we'd been part of a great occasion, to bask in the blinding glow of our medals and to sleep the sleep of the 'just'.



Medal Presentation

6 EVENTS = 5 GOLD & 1 SILVER ADELAIDE SEA DRAGONS

Mildura Masters Games
16-24 August 2009

The Mildura Masters Games was instigated in 2001, and has been an annual event ever since. This year (2009) saw dragon boating as part of the competition for the first time.

Mildura did not previously have a dragon boat club, but this year Tubby Ramsay has, to quote the program, "coerced and guided a feisty group of new comers who've gone on to form Mildura's first dragon boat club. And they were out on the water, some of them 'virgin' paddlers, but showing a great competitive spirit, with thanks to the other clubs who filled spots in their boat when extra bodies were needed.

Teams for 10s and 20s racing were entered from:

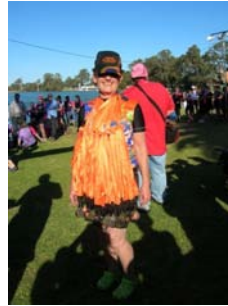
- South Australia Dragons Abreast
- Adelaide Survivors Abreast
- Bendigo
- Geelong
- Mildura Dragon Boat Club
- Eyre Raiders (a composite team of Pt Lincoln Sea Raiders, and Streaky Bay and Ceduna Sea Dragons
- Adelaide Sea Dragons.

A course was laid out in the River Murray, not quite 200 metres, but quite tricky with current and wind. In fact, it was sort of reminiscent of West Lakes, with strong head winds as the day wore on. The original plan was to have three rounds of each category, with the best two times determining the winner, but as it turned out, the winds and current were so strong and dangerous that only two rounds of each category were competed. It was good to see medals being shared among the clubs, and the team spirit and cooperation amongst everyone was fantastic.

It was a great day, the weather was cooperative (it was very windy and rainy on Sunday), and the racing was good. Challenges have been laid down for the coming racing season, and the friendly rivalry

engendered at the Mildura Games should see some good competition this season.

Dragon Boating is to be a part of the Mildura Games from now on, and hopefully next year more teams will take part.



FIERCE, FAST AND FURIOUS

On Saturday 15th August a combined Eyre Peninsula Dragon Boat team competed in the Mildura Masters Games. There were 8 teams from across Victoria and South Australia who entered in this competition. 29 paddlers from Port Lincoln Blue Water Raiders, Ceduna Sea Dragons and Streaky Bay Sea Dragons formed an awesome team, the "EYRE PENINSULA SEA RAIDERS". An inspirational speech at the beginning of the day was made by Coach Raelene Fuller and we came together as a team and did what was asked of us and "left a little Eyre Peninsula salt water determination in the river"!

Conditions were sunny and mild with near perfect conditions in the morning. Unfortunately the always anticipated wind came up and cut the race day short, but not before we had competed twice in each event. The 2 race times were combined to determine the winners.

As the 3 clubs had not had the opportunity to train together before the event, the first race was our "training" and we took line honours beating the competition over the finish line by several seconds. The EP Sea Raiders gained a medal in each event entered! Masters Mixed 20 event, GOLD. Grand Masters mixed 20, GOLD. Masters Women 20, SILVER. Masters Women 10, BRONZE. Masters Mixed 10, BRONZE. Grand Masters Women 10, BRONZE. A new category was run for the first time in Mildura, the GREAT Grand Masters (60 years and over). 3 paddlers from Streaky Bay and Ceduna joined the Adelaide Sea Dragons for this event and won an additional Gold Medal.

Congratulations have to go to all the participants on the day but what a huge effort by the EP Sea Raiders, travelling all that way. Thank you to our 2 coaches, Raelene Fuller (Port Lincoln) and Yvonne Watkinson (Streaky Bay) who did a fabulous job in preparing us for the day. Congratulations and thanks to our 3 sweeps, Bob Gibbs, Judy Gower and Louise Mudge who kept us all in the boat in

very different and difficult conditions as well as our drummers, Gail Richardson, Mary Daw and George Gutteridge who kept us in time and spurred us on throughout the races. Let's not forget the paddlers who did an awesome job. Combined we did Eyre Peninsula proud!

The Eyre Peninsula crews are aiming to form a South Australian Regional Team to compete in the State and National Titles being held next year in Adelaide during April 2010.

The Port Lincoln Blue Water Raiders, Ceduna Sea Dragons and Streaky Bay Sea Dragons are all looking for new recruits, this is a fun sport inclusive of all ages, gender and fitness, why don't you give it a try!



Back Row standing from L-R:

Judy Gower, Louise Mudge, Kaylene Kotz, Margaret Spry, Kate Crawford, Mary Daw, Vignina Holness, Raelen Fuller, Johnis Parthenis, Lyn Sweet, Jane Carey, Chrissy Miller, Carol Guidera, Penny Hogan, Meredith Carlier, Jenny Chillingworth, Pip Will, Denice Craig.

Middle Row kneeling L-R:

Kathy Meier, Arthur Karatzovalis, Gail Richardson, Mavis Gibbes, Robyne Noll, Beth Dunchue, Jo Tanti, George Guteridge, Jenny Hammat, Di Warmington

Front Row lying:

Bob Gibbes



The race photo teams are:

Boat 1 South Australian Dragons Abreast, from Adelaide, Boat 2 EP Sea Raiders, Boat 3 Bendigo team

SA DRAGONS ABREAST

The Regional Masters Games in Mildura provided our club with a great opportunity to be involved in a warm up event prior to the start of the season. It was an opportunity for all members to get to know each other better.

We were very pleased that 31 members of SADA were able to travel to the 2009 Regional Masters Games in Mildura. On Saturday 15th about 7 dragon boat teams arrived at the riverbank for a 42 race event. DBSA was well represented by teams from Sea Dragons, Adelaide Survivors Abreast and a combination team from Eyre Peninsula. It was exciting to see the enthusiasm of the newly formed Mildura team and their success.

Races were all 200m. SADA teams were to be involved in 27 races in the best of 2 from 3 races format. The early races were in calm conditions but later in the day the windy conditions slowed the starts and the day was reduced to results from the first 2 races in each category. It was a great day with tidying up and medals presented by 3.30. And so, an early start to the celebrations!

SADA was successful and received Masters Games Medals for, ...

Breast Cancer Survivors
Gold

Grand Master Women 20's
Gold

Grand Master Mixed 10's
Gold

Master Women 20's
Gold

Master Women 20's
Gold

Grand Master Women 10's Team 1
Silver

Master Women 10's Team 1
Silver

Master Mixed 10's
Silver

The games provided our club with an early season racing event and for several of our members it was their first race day. How excited they were to compete and win medals! Many members expressed interest in the prospect of similar masters events, such as Port Pirie.

The competition was well organized by Sea Dragons and our thanks are expressed especially to John Holland and Chris Woods and of course Jennifer Bould, for efficiently keeping the records of the races.

Thanks to all involved from S.A.

SADA
Helen Macleod

NEXT DRAGON'S BREATH

Next Dragon's Breath Articles and Pictures are due:

Friday 30th October 2009

be active go for a paddle