

FAIRFIELD CANOE CLUB

Celebrating 90 years
1919 – 2009

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2009



**90TH YEAR
ANNIVERSARY**
29th November
2009

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How to contribute

All contributions to the club newsletter welcome – photos, articles, letters to the editor, humour, advertisements. Contributions to be made by email.

Please submit material to the Editor

Email newsletter@fairfieldcanoecub.org.au

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We gratefully welcome any articles or advertisements submitted for publication. However we cannot guarantee that any submission will be published in a particular issue of the Fairfield Canoe Club newsletter. The editorial team reserves the right to make editorial and layout changes to any submission while doing its best to preserve the intention of the original submission.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The AGM has been held since the printing of the last newsletter. Three Board members retired. Kevin Hannington stepped down after many years on the Board in a variety of roles. Kevin, we thank you very much for your long standing commitment to the Club. The two other retiring members were Harry Brockwell and Peter Goldsworthy. Their contributions have been greatly appreciated and both continue to serve on sub-committees.

New board members are Neil Grierson who will chair the Boat Maintenance Committee, Michael Kane who returns with his considerable expertise as Treasurer and Tony Payne who chairs the Communications Committee.

Other Board positions are held by Rachel Heath (Social Committee), Liz Jenkins (Technical Committee), and Don Campbell (Secretary).

The Winter Series has again been a great success for Fairfield Canoe Club. The number of participants from the Club was higher than ever and some excellent performances were witnessed. Full details of the events will be found elsewhere in this newsletter. Our thanks and congratulations must go to Race Directors Kevin Hannington and Liz Jenkins and to the many participating paddlers.

The repair of the landing is continuing steadily under the capable direction of Alex James, and we are very grateful for his considerable help on this project. The necessary materials have been fabricated and purchased and further working bees will soon be under way to complete the task. Thanks to all those who have volunteered their labour to finish this task.

A review of the Club fleets, both Beginners' and Intermediate, has been carried out under the guidance of Rachel Heath. The aim is to provide a suitable fleet to allow paddlers to progress their skills to their own level, and to this end the intermediate fleet will have a variety of boats to cover different paddler weights and skill levels. A regular turnover of boats is planned to maintain quality. Some older boats will be disposed of, and five new boats have already been ordered.

Maintenance of Club boats is always an issue, in terms of volunteers' time and money spent with commercial repairers. You are strongly encouraged to take the very best care of Club boats, to sign on and off when you use one, and to promptly report any damage you find so that the boats remain useable for all members at all times.

We have recently purchased a new barbecue (not yet christened at time of writing) and in the interests of safety, the Club outboard has been fitted with a prop guard.

Don't forget the 90th Anniversary celebrations on 29th November. See you there!

David Bevan
Chairman

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS FOR 2009/2010

November

21	Sprint Regatta	Nagambie
22	Handicap Races	FCC
29	FCC 90th Anniversary Celebration	FCC

December

6	Ben Ward 40 Miler	Cobram
13	Footscray Dress Rehearsal	Footscray
27	Murray Marathon	Yarrowonga

January

16	Sprint Regatta	Geelong
23	Summer Series Race 1	Deniliquin
24	Summer Series Race 2	Yarrowonga
30	Sprint Regatta	Melbourne

February

7	Summer Series Race 3	Footscray
27	Summer Series Race 4	Albury
28	Summer Series Race 5	Albury

March

6	Sprint Regatta	Melbourne
20-21	Summer Finale	Geelong

April

25	Winter Series Race 1	Warrnambool
18	Mars Challenge	Ballarat

May

2	All Schools Championships	Essendon
16	Winter Series Race 2	Patterson Lakes

June

6	Winter Series Race 3	Bairnsdale
12	World Cup 1 – ICF	TBA
20	Winter Series Race 4	Faisfield

July

18	Winter Series Race 5	Ivanhoe
24-25	World Cup 2 – ICF	Germany

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS



Peta Wait, Marlena Ahrens, James Campbell (circled) and the Australian team. Photo courtesy Don Campbell.

The ICF World Marathon Kayak Championships were held in Crestuma Portugal between September 18 to 20.

The Fairfield representatives in the Australian team were Peta Wait, Marlena Ahrens and James Campbell. Each of our representatives were involved in K2 events, their partners included Sara O'Connell-Brechin from Sydney, Cat McArthur from Ivanhoe-Northcote and David Ceddia (Patterson Lakes).

The team attended a training camp at the Nelo training Centre for the week prior to the championships and then stayed in a hotel in Porto, 40km from Crestuma, for the duration of the championships.

It was a fantastic experience to sit and watch our representatives. I felt extremely proud to be there and to offer support to our team. The team was well managed by Cameron McGill and Andrew Coutts from Patterson Lakes, with assistance from Rob Russell from Ivanhoe-Northcote. All three have a great deal of experience with junior paddlers. Access to boats was not an issue, and the event was very well run despite the observation that the finishing touches were made to the judging tower during the first morning of the competition. The site was very picturesque and the spectacle of watching the tide rise 3.8 metres during the event was awesome.

The countries that performed very strongly included Spain, South Africa, Hungary, Denmark and Great Britain. All were supported by a contingent of Masters paddlers. Interestingly the Danish racing season and their boat categories bear an uncanny resemblance to our own, however they have a much more integrated coaching program at the national level, which begs the question of how this could be achieved at very little cost in Australia.

The mood at the event was of great excitement and it was easy to strike up conversations with the foreign team supporters, particularly the South Africans who were very pleased with recent events in world rugby.

Marlena and Cat performed creditably finishing 12th out of 18. I am sure they found the competition pretty tough and now have an appreciation of how high the bar is in international competition. James and David had a very tough race finishing 24th out of 35 starters, with carnage all around them during their first lap including a fall at entry and exit at the first portage. Peta and Sara finished 12th from a field of 20. My impression is that Peta thoroughly enjoyed her first international experience and is now even keener to get the sort of domestic competition she is going to need to take her to a higher level internationally. Hopefully all of our representatives will have a chance to benefit from their experience. They are all very aware of the depth of support that they have had from their Fairfield Canoe Club members.

My final observations are that Australia's younger less experienced paddlers lack nothing as international competitors that a stronger domestic competition and some attention to a coordinated coaching program wouldn't fix. This should include running local marathon competition races in the higher divisions over an international style lap course with portages where possible. In Victoria a strong sprint program integrated with the marathon program either on flat water or in conjunction with the SLSC surfski competition would be of immense benefit, particularly to the younger paddlers. Our senior paddlers were very helpful to the juniors and provided outstanding examples of thorough preparation as well as showing consideration to the juniors. My congratulations to the competitors and team managers for their performance this year.

Next year's World championships will be held near Barcelona late in September with the World Masters Marathon event held over the three days prior. Anyone interested in coming to support our representatives? It is extraordinarily helpful to the team members.

A comprehensive race report is available on the Australian Canoeing Victoria website courtesy of Chris Alger.

Don Campbell

PADDLER PROFILE – JAMES CAMPBELL



James, a Year 11 Trinity Grammar student, recently paddled in Denmark and Portugal with the Australian Junior Marathon Kayak Team.

Can you remember when you first paddled a kayak?

I cannot remember the very first time, but I began kayaking after going to the Murray marathon and watching my brother race as part of the Trinity team. I saw them race and just wanted to get out there. I really enjoyed my first Murray marathon as a paddler, because it just felt really good to be part of the race and not always watching from the bank.

Have you always been interested in sport?

I played football, cricket and soccer when I was younger, but I wasn't particularly keen on them. I liked soccer more than the other two.

What are you studying at Trinity?

I'm in year 11 at Trinity, doing chemistry, physics, maths, English and Chinese. I'm hoping I can do well enough next year to go to uni and do a science or engineering type of degree.

Can you describe your paddling week?

In the lead up to the world champs I would be paddling about 6 times a week, with a few gym sessions and a few runs.

Can you describe how you came to be selected to paddle with the Australian team?

To qualify I came 2nd in the under 18 K2 division with David Ceddia from Woodleigh. The trips overseas were similar to what I was expecting but I was quite amazed by the world championships in Portugal. There were a lot of fast boats, just to watch races of such a high standard was really enjoyable.

Can you tell us about the overseas trips?

I have been to Denmark and Portugal to go to the World cup and World championships respectively. The speed off the start line is a lot faster, but after that the biggest difference was the number of wash packs which formed and began chasing each other. With such a large field it was possible to chase down or be caught by more people during the race. Normally in a race here there just aren't the same number of boats moving up and down the field.

Had you travelled overseas before? Did you have a team coach?

I had never been paddling overseas before. But I had been to China on a school trip.

As for the trip to Portugal the team was managed by Andrew Coutts, there was no official team coach as everyone sort of had separate coaches. But we did travel with the senior team, which was good, as they had lots of tips for the juniors.

No doubt you will be studying hard next year for year 12, will you have time to kayak?

Next year I aim to qualify for the team again and improve upon this year's results at the world champs. I will certainly have/make time for paddling. I am doing the Murray this year with Trinity, which should be good fun. Hopefully we can win again this year.

Do you think your father (FCC Board member Don) will ever paddle faster than you?

Very funny.

What is your favourite music?

Most of the stuff that's on the radio, I listen to triple-J a lot in the car to and from training and races. That's pretty good.

Any person that you really admire in sport or anywhere else that is an inspiration?

Probably my family members.

Photo courtesy Alex Goldsworthy

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

We have had some changes to our committee this year with the resignation of Tony Payne and Paul Main. We want to thank these members for their advice and input into this committee over the previous 12 months for Tony and some years for Paul. Tony has moved on to the Board and has been allocated the role of Communication Convenor, we wish him well in his new role. Paul has moved on to his local Scout Group where he is the Scout Master, we also wish him well with his endeavours in this new direction for Paul.

There are two new members of the Technical Committee and they are Darren Ryan who is co-ordinator of the club Sunday Training and Gary Flanigan who is Co-ordinator of Canoe Polo. We welcome them to our committee and look forward to working with them.

Thank you to all members who completed the Sunday Session Training survey. We will be compiling and addressing the results at our coming meetings. We will keep members informed of the outcome.

We are including the FCC Coaching Strategy as part of this newsletter. All Coaches work to address this document as it is our driving policy for Coaching at FCC. From this strategy we have decided to advertise for the position of Coaching Coordinator for 2010. This position will be appointed by the Board for 12 months period and is responsible to the Technical Committee. See further information in this newsletter.

FCC has applied for Accreditation with Canoeing Victoria as a Sprint Certified Training Club and Sprint High Performance Training Club. This process requires our club to produce proof of our ability to cater for and maintain appropriate standards for sprint training programs.

Sprint racing has returned to Canoeing Victoria. With a new committee and Chairperson in Andrea Boothroyd, we have been asked to help host the first race of the season on Saturday 21st November at Nagambie Regatta Centre. This is to be a learning experience for FCC in hosting sprints but we are up to the challenge!

The program is being arranged so that those volunteers who are also paddlers can race as well. Please consider volunteering and paddling at this Regatta. If sufficient numbers, I will arrange a bus for the day.

It is with great enthusiasm that I announce that Peter Goldsworthy is to be a Co Race Director with me for 2010. I look forward to working with Peter and providing our members with support and guidance in their race day preparations and in focusing our club on achieving our aim; being the winners of Winter Series Trophy and the Sprint Racing Trophy for 2010.

Our club will be hosting Race 4 of the winter series at Nagambie Regatta Centre on 20th June 2010. We will be looking for volunteers to help run this race so please put this date in your diaries now.

Liz Jenkins
Technical Committee Convenor

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

FAIRFIELD CANOE CLUB COACHING COORDINATOR

The FCC Board is seeking expressions of interest (EOI) from club members for the following position of FCC Coaching Coordinator. As with all club roles the position is voluntary and requires someone with the time, passion and energy to take an already successful club to new levels of performance. As this is a coordinating role, coaching experience is not a pre-requisite. A written EOI (no longer than 2 pages) should be submitted to the Board, marked to the attention of the Secretary, no later than December 12th 2009. The EOI should indicate how the applicant would envisage fulfilling the role as described below.

POSITION TITLE Fairfield Canoe Club Coaching Coordinator

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE

The purpose of this position is to coordinate and help develop an effective coaching program at the club in line with the FCC Coaching Strategy.

REPORTS TO Technical Committee

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

12 months from January to December 31st 2010

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To implement the FCC Coaching Strategy
2. To monitor the FCC Coaching Program, including the establishment of a mentoring system for new coaches
3. Develop training tools and resources for coaches
4. Coordinate a regular meeting with all coaches at FCC, including preparation of agendas and minutes.
5. Liaise with all Coaches at FCC to ensure optimum use of club equipment and prevent clashes of timing and resource usage.
6. Develop a Kayaking Pathway for paddler's progression utilising all suitable coaching at FCC.
7. Liaise with coaches to develop a standardised approach to technique.
8. Assist with the development of Sprint, Canoe Polo and Canoeing coaching at FCC
9. Address areas of transition from club level to elite level paddling
10. Coordinate an assessment process for paddlers to progress to higher levels of competency
11. Co-ordinate Coaches Development
12. Identify and address coaching issues

DESIRABLE ATTRIBUTES

- Good communication skills
- Ability to work constructively in a team environment
- Ability to set up systems and processes to reach a desired outcome.
- Good organisation skills
- Abilities in conflict management

FCC COACHING STRATEGY

VISION STATEMENT

To provide FCC Cooperative Ltd members with a canoeing program of State, National and International excellence from beginner to elite levels as canoeist, officials and coaches.

AIM

To develop and implement FCC Cooperative Ltd endorsed programs, which provide canoeing related skills and knowledge to all members.

A THE PROGRAM

1 Canoeists

a. FCC Beginners Course

- 4 Sessions
- Introduction to flatwater canoeing and kayaking
- An agreed fee to be paid to the cooperative
- Conducted by cooperative endorsed AC qualified coaches or instructors.

b. FCC Beginner Advanced Courses

- Members only
- No cost
- Conducted by AC qualified coaches

c. Squad Training on Sundays

- Club training sessions on Sundays 10am–11.30am
- No cost
- Conducted by experienced club members or AC qualified Coaches

d. Canoe Polo

- Training as arranged

e. Social & Touring Paddling

- FCC will support, promote and encourage experienced Co-operative members to arrange canoeing tours for Co-operative members
- May be day tours or longer
- Planned itinerary to be provided
- Necessary equipment list to be provided

2 Coaches

The Cooperative agrees:

- To identify, encourage and assist members to qualify as coaches for canoeing
- To publicize and promote relevant courses conducted by Canoeing Victoria and Australian Canoeing
- To assist by hosting coaches courses as deemed appropriate
- To provide opportunities for qualified coaches to update and continue to improve their skill while contributing to Cooperative programs

The Coaches agree:

- To abide by the Fairfield Canoe Club Co-operative Ltd Charter
- To abide by the FCC Coaching Strategy
- To abide by AC Code of Behaviour
- To be responsible for the safety and behaviour of their students while attending their lessons

- Hold a current Working with Children's Check
- Have a current qualification from CV and AC including a current First Aid certificate
- Private Coaches to have proof of their private indemnity insurance

3 Officials

The Cooperative agrees:

- To identify, encourage and assist members to qualify as officials for canoeing
- To publicize and promote relevant courses conducted by Canoeing Victoria or Australian Canoeing
- To assist by hosting officials courses as deemed appropriate
- To provide opportunities for qualified officials to update and continue to improve their skills while contributing to Cooperative, CV and AC programs

4 Equipment

- The equipment for the programs is provided by the cooperative from its existing fleet.

B. PROGRAM MONITORING

- All Club programs will be monitored and reviewed regularly by a co-operative appointed Coaching Co-ordinator, who will liaise between the Technical committee and coaches.
- The Coaching Co-ordinator's role will be to implement the co-operative's coaching strategy by communicating, co-ordinating and supporting, all coaches in their positions at the co-operative.
- Coaches will attend workshop activities to discuss and monitor club programs as arranged by the Technical committee.

C. PRIVATE COACHING

- Private Coaching at the Co-operative is available for Co-operative members and registered AC members, by arrangement with individual coaches.
- The Co-operative will support private coaching by club coaches through the use of club equipment and facilities, including communication systems outside designated club training times.
- Private Coaches can integrate their students into club activities through agreement with the Technical Committee.
- The Co-operative will control the use of club facilities for private coaching eg. By establishing maximum numbers of 6 sets of equipment in a single session to ensure equipment is available for other members.

D. COACHES CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

- The comprehensive Code of Behaviour of Australian Canoeing Member Protection Bylaws determine the code of behaviour of this strategy for all persons

SPRINT REGATTAS

Ever wanted to try an Olympic sport? Here is your opportunity!

Why not give flatwater (sprint) kayaking a shot? If you are a seasoned marathon paddler you can enjoy the benefits of working on a faster start. How often have you missed the wash of a faster boat at the start of an endurance race? Sprint training and racing will help you keep up with the best from the word 'go'!

Distances include 200m, 500m and 1000m, very achievable by paddlers of all ages and abilities. Juniors, open AND masters paddlers encouraged to participate in either touring or racing kayaks and even canoes.

If you're interested in having a go, keep an eye out for race organisation details on the white board at the club or send an email to Fairfield Canoe Club member Jen Stevens at jenniferstevens@hotmail.com. If you are keen to experience the excitement and the adrenaline rush of a sprint racing but don't want to get wet just yet, why not volunteer to help run the events. If you are interested in helping please give Canoeing Victoria a call on (03) 8846 4120.

These are the up and coming scheduled State and National Flatwater races for the 2009/2010 season.

EVENT	LOCATION	DATE
Sprint Regatta	Nagambie	21 November 2009
National Grand Prix Race 1	Adelaide	11–13 December 2009
Sprint Regatta	Geelong	16 January 2010
Sprint Regatta	Melbourne	30 January 2010
Victorian Championships	TBA	February 2010
Victorian School Champs	TBA	February 2010
National Grand Prix Race 2	Sydney	12–14 February 2010
Sprint Regatta	Melbourne	6 March 2010
National Championships	Penrith	10–14 March 2010
5 & 10km Regatta	TBA	15 August 2010
Sprint Regatta	TBA	20 November 2010

Further details at Canoeing Victoria web site www.vic.canoe.org.au

NAGAMBIE SPRINT REGATTA – 21ST NOVEMBER 2009

The Nagambie Sprint Regatta is on in a couple of weeks, and Fairfield is helping to run the event. So we're looking for members to race on the day, as well as to assist with scrutineering, starts, timekeeping, etc. If you can assist, please contact Liz Jenkins on 0413 331 707 or leave details on whiteboard at FCC.

Details of the event are: 1000m, 200m & 200m relay on fully buoyed course. Specific classes for master paddlers. K and TK classes. Registration: 8am–8.30am. Scrutineering from 8am. Briefing (mandatory for competitors) 8.45am. First race 9am. Pre-registration by 17 November 5pm essential. No entries or changes taken on the day however relay teams can be determined on the day. Crew or category changes close 19 November 5pm. Both pre and post race scrutineering apply as per ICF rules. Boat weights: single kayak 12kg, double kayak 18kg, K4 30kg, C1 16kg, C2 20kg.

RACE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Third successive win of the Winter Series Trophy in 2009. Thanks to all those wonderful paddlers who assisted in achieving this great result for our club.

Our results were outstanding again this year with our lead over our competitors in the all three competitions exceptional, seniors by 212 pts, juniors by 64 pts and Schools by 12 pts. We have proven that paddlers at FCC are dedicated and determined to win against any opposition.

Our congratulations go to all the Medal Winners for 2009.

We have tried a different way to organize our club entries this year with the whiteboard at the club and entry on-line. It seems most people like the whiteboard arrangement, which has enabled the Race Directors to easily arrange the race day details, making organizational procedures simplified.

The introduction of CV's Race registration processes has also made race day more harmonious for paddlers and with the addition of paying via internet to be introduced next year, those long queues on cold days will be a thing of the past. Thanks to CV for the ongoing improvements for our paddlers!

Our bus trips away have again been subsidised by the club keeping them cost effective for members as well as providing an environmental benefit. Accommodation is adequate in cabins with breakfast included. We always have a pub meal on Saturday night, and if you are quick, a few snacks on the bus on the way home. It is a very easy pace and fun weekend for all concerned.

To all the volunteers who helped at our races this year, a big thankyou for your efforts. As paddlers, we all expect our safety to be looked after, and that requires a certain number of officials and volunteers. So thankyou to all volunteers particularly those sitting out in the freezing weather waiting for us to come back to the finish.

Kevin is stepping down as Race Director and we want to thank you all for being so accommodating to our issues as Fairfield's resources and infrastructure has strained under the magnitude of paddlers wanting to race. For next year the FCC Board has approved the purchase of more boats for our Intermediate fleet, which we hope will alleviate the shortage of good quality boats for racing.

Liz and Kevin
Race Directors

TOUR DE BAIRNSDALE

The Bairnsdale race promised to be a very strong race for Fairfield with a huge representation from the blue and blue. In particular Fairfield was looking pretty strong towards the pointier end of the field with 9 paddlers lined up to race in Divisions 3 and 4. The 5 of us in Div 3 had some ideas for tactics.

Our plan was to form a pack, in which the stronger FCC paddlers would assist the slower ones. The idea was to tire the non-FCC paddlers in the pack, then burn them off at the end. In order to pull this off we decided on aliases for each of the FCC paddlers, taken from the Tour de France. These were: Levi Leipheimer (Chris Bennett), Lance Armstrong (Peta Wait), Braddley Wiggins (Chris Runting), Cadel Evans (Harry Brockwell) and Alberto Contador (Daniel Lansell-Kenny)

With this cunning plan in mind, we all travelled to Bairnsdale, secure in the knowledge that we could rely on our teammates to get us out of difficulty and to protect us from our rival paddlers from other clubs.

However, on the day, the race turned out quite differently. To begin with, Cadel Evans didn't make it to Bairnsdale so we were already one man down. An unfair starting line was the next problem, with the line angled away from the first bend, giving the inside paddlers a huge advantage.

I had the best position on the inside but Peta Wait and Chris Runting were out wide. Chris Bennet was also in a good position but after the start went out wide to help Peta. Unfortunately the spanner in our works was Dominique Scarfe (FACC), who absolutely gunned it off the start and really ripped the field apart.

After about 1km into the race, wash packs had formed with the lead pack consisting of Dom, Chris Bennett and myself. Only 5 to 10m back was Peta and Will Hallyburton (a Div 4 FCC paddler) and a short way further back Chris Runting and the INCC paddler, Simon St Hill (predicted to be someone who could ruin our "plan"). As planned Chris and I let Dom take the lead to the first buoy, where Chris pushed Dom wide to slow him down, hoping to help Peta and Will catch up. But every time they got close Dom sprinted. At the 6km mark Peta and Will did get on the wash but this was short lived as Dom launched one of the strongest mid-race sprints I have ever seen.

After Peta and Will dropped off they formed a larger pack with Chris Runting and our INCC rival (now ally in the chase) Simon St Hill. At around the mid point of the race, after some ribbing from Dom about doing some real work, Chris Bennett launched a series of sprints but we soon realised Dom couldn't be dropped easily. Once again we let Dom take the lead and I was happy to wash ride to protect my previously injured shoulder. Unfortunately with the sprints, heavy wind and choppy water my shoulder started to play up and I decided to pull out to prevent further damage.

For the last 6km of the race, positions in the two packs didn't change so it came down to a sprint to the line. Chris Bennett and Dom put on a great exhibition with only a foot separating them – unfortunately for our plans, with Dom first. He did deserve his victory though as he was forced to lead a lot more than anyone else. With first and second decided it was now down to who would get the 3rd ribbon. Chris Runting got it, with Peta and Simon St Hill coming in close behind.

Other FCC results for the day were:

Div 4 Will Hallyburton 1st, Jen Stevens 2nd

Div 5 Tim Arnold 3rd

Div 6 Greg Bauld 1st, Tom Hedditch 2nd, Nick Roberts 3rd

Div 7 Kieran Dews 1st

Div 8 Tom Noonan 1st, Chris Smith 2nd, Tom Cazalet 3rd

TK1 Vet 60 Gary Flanigan 2nd

Div 1 doubles James Campbell and his PLCC partner David Ceddia 1st

To conclude, Bairnsdale was an excellent race. We went into the race with a plan and although it didn't really work it added a new dimension to racing and something I wouldn't mind trying again. As with other country races it was lots of fun and had a real team spirit to it, which made it completely worthwhile. With FCC paddlers staying together, eating at the local pub; it's a great chance to meet the other club members and have some fun. I would definitely recommend club members who are hesitant to travel the distance to get on the FCC bus and have a really fun weekend.

Daniel Lansell-Kenny

RACE 6 GEELONG

The Geelong Winter Series Race 6 started like any other for me, except for the fact we had ideal conditions. No wind and a sunny, cloudless sky.

With start time approaching, I double-checked boat, water bladder, PFD, sunglasses all in order. Tightened foot plate and seat bolts. With the first race in my new Rebel 50 about to start thoughts were on staying upright and the start strategy. The river looked very inviting, mirrored reflections of native scrub and rushes, clear (clean) water with edges marked by water weeds and rushes on the banks.

Time to go, joined the queue lugging boat and gear towards the dock. Into the water adjusted GPS and mucked around with the water bladder for a while getting it into position behind the seat. Time for a quick warm up, so headed downstream away from the start line, surrounded by about 40 other boats on the water, all seemed well. Down on the bend a quick scan of boats found that none looked familiar. Rodrigo, Andrew C, Scott and other FCC paddlers were nowhere in site. In fact none of the boats had numbers in the six hundred series! A quick turn provided the answer, in the far distance, a flotilla of boats was rounding the first bend almost out of sight. I'd missed my start!

Not knowing what to do I moved up and casually joined the next start. After finding some familiar FCC colours David quickly enlightened me on the process – "Just go now you've missed your start."

So from the middle of all the start 7 boats, off I went, it felt strange, a start in calm water with no visible competition. The sight on the first bend made me almost thankful I'd missed the start, a handful of other paddlers were up to their waists in weeds recovering after capsizing. With the river narrowing on the bend and a large number of boats in the start, I assume washing machine conditions were the cause.

Once around the first bend, those thoughts quickly evaporated as my competitors were nowhere in sight. Slowly other boats appeared, a brief respite and off to the next group. Memories of Liz mentioning something about leap-frogging from one bunch to the next came to mind.

A dock appeared with Carsten perched in an ideal location for photos, I didn't feel like smiling.

Up towards the first turn buoy and my competitors raced past in the opposite direction in two packs only a few seconds apart. With a quick exchange of a few encouraging words they were gone. Around the top buoy, on the inside I passed another boat. Downstream towards the start, a purple plastic container appeared floating in the middle of the river, thoughts shifted to recall the briefing, Wasn't there something about a blue buoy and keeping right. Hey maybe I'm colour blind or its the sunglasses but better stay right.

With oncoming MLC girls, Trinity boys and a few Strathcona boats in sight, thoughts again shifted to just staying upright. Past the start line down towards the bottom buoy a few distant cheers were heard. Suddenly, with an almost machinegun-like beat, two K2s with a K1 riding their wash came alongside. The opportunity for a free ride was too good to miss so with a sudden surge of energy I caught their wash, well almost, within ten seconds I was thrown out the back and left behind in turbulent waters. Thanks to those Sunday Club sessions I remained upright.

Suddenly the brakes were applied, speed-stopping ribbon weeds all around, I'd cut the corner too tightly and found myself in a tangle of weeds.

Around the next bend and a couple of TK1s appeared in front, great time to catch my breath and ride their wash for a while. With the bottom buoy in sight the other Div 6 competitors passed in the other direction, now spread out with two clear leaders. Rodrigo and Andrew were battling it out in the second pack with Nick Roberts on their heels.

Turning at the bottom buoy was straightforward. Up past the start and into the top straight. Passing a few others provided an opportunity for conversation, taking thoughts away from the uphill task ahead.

This second lap was uneventful, each boat overtaken providing a little more motivation to maintain my boat speed. On approaching the bottom buoy caught up with another Div 6 boat, another inside track around the buoy provided the chance to overtake.

The finish line appeared ahead, so I carefully aimed at the middle of the two finishing buoys, but crossing the line produced no result, no blaring horn. Just as a glance at the GPS showed the full 12kms had been travelled, the horn sounded. What a relief, another race completed!

Although my results were clearly mid field, the GPS again provided some good news as I had achieved a personal best for that distance.

Getting back to the dock was slow, with such a limited length of dock a queue had formed. A clear path appeared in front, moving forward an official warned of danger. On my right two Div 1 K1s at top speed were heading straight for me, or rather the dock for their next portage. I certainly welcomed the advice, as getting t-boned was not part of the plan!

Peter Goldsworthy

RACE 7 LAKE AURAVALE

THE UNKNOWN PADDLER

Does anyone really remember or care what happened that day?
Three blokes I know do!

The challenge was posted, 2 really old FCC members Tony Payne and Steve Gadsden asserted their right to the mantle of FCCs fastest canoe paddlers. Trevor Archibald and I were rightly affronted as we were both old as well and sought to defend our unofficial title to being FCC's fastest canoe paddlers – a highly valued commodity that had not been challenged for some years.

The day of truth commenced with a very good turnout for most classes but as expected with the bar set so high and terrific performances anticipated, no other challengers were prepared to step up to the mark in the very elite TC2 class.

The first TC2 contenders (Trev and I) entered the arena (Lake Auravale) and were summarily abused by the megaphone toting Joe Alia for illegally entering the course and were threatened with disqualification. We were subsequently rounded up by a speedboat and removed from the course (although to my best recollection we had been told by scrutineering and marshalling it was OK to get out and warm up).

Although a sunny day there was a particularly brisk wind whipping across the lake making paddling quite a fresh experience.

An exuberant team of Payne and Gadsden enjoyed some gamesmanship on the start line with a bit of light banter and extrapolated on the likely outcome. Well all that was put to bed when the start was announced and a fleet of about 30 kayaks accelerated madly around us.

Gadsden & Payne shot off as well. I had suggested to Trev that we hold back and when the wash had settled to move up. Well a good theory but in practice it just saw us being skewed off a true course in the wash and swells, first left, then right and being left well and truly behind by all.

I wish I could now tell a story of do or die and a fight to the end but really all we did was paddle round and round the lake into quite a nasty headwind at the back part of the course until we were really quite tired and eventually overtaken by the full distance K2 crews at about an hour and 20 minutes into our race.

Some facts may have been embellished for the purpose of a good story – apologies to all the other FCC paddlers competing on the day for ignoring your terrific performances in this story.

Alex James

(Editors note: Although Alex and Trev prevailed in this years race they were too scared to race in 2008, leaving the glory to Payne and Gadsden that year. Score – 1 race each – look out 2010!)

The morning of Saturday the 5th of September, up at 7am in a car at 8am, at Geelong Canoe club by 9.30am, and in a kayak at 11am. So starts the Victorian Champs.

My first big decision of the day was the choice between a thermal or long sleeved top. It wasn't too cold on the bank, but the wind chill and the inevitable damp clothing while being on the water made most people advise a short-sleeved thermal, but as I didn't have one with me, I eventually decided on the long-sleeved thermal.

While scrutineering the start list, I found the name of an unknown paddler in my class, someone I'd never heard of and never seen paddle before. Something quite new to me considering it's been more or less the same people in my class for most races.

About a kilometre and a half into the race, I felt I was doing well, but was slightly regretting the thermal; I was getting just a little too warm for my comfort. At this point, just as I was negotiating the wash of a guy in a single in front of me, the unknown girl suddenly appeared out of nowhere, going at a rather surprising speed considering she'd been behind me up until this point. Unfortunately, that surprising speed was too much for me to keep up with and I quickly fell behind. It was comforting when I was approaching the jetty, and saw ahead of me that the unknown girl was walking the portage. I tried to make as much time as possible on her, and managed to get back in just behind her. Problem, she had someone to wash ride, I didn't. I fell behind again.

It wasn't until after the second portage, on my final lap of the race, that I finally began to see the unknown paddler again. At first she was just a speck, then a bigger blotch in my vision. As I realised that I was getting closer, I really put in the effort to catch up. I knew that if I could carry on catching up at this rate that I may just have a chance of overtaking her. I continued with this optimistic frame of mind until I finally caught her as I was passing the club house and preparing for the final turn. I was greeted by a chorus of cheers from the bank, which spurred me on and helped give me the energy to overtake her. She stayed just out of my vision after the turn, and remained there until about 300 metres from the line. At that point she decided to make an attempt to overtake me, but I wasn't going to let her do that lightly, not after all the effort I'd put in to catch her.

For a little, it looked like I would take the place, but then I started to flag, and she crept up. We were both killing ourselves to take the third place medal, and putting everything in. About 5 metres from the line, I saw her capsize in my peripheral vision. The relief overtook me, and I relaxed for just a second because I knew I'd done it. Mistake. That second of relaxation was enough to make me fall in too, and suddenly the pair of us were gasping in the cold and hoping that we'd be the faster swimmer. The unknown paddler tried a deep-water entry, but didn't succeed. I, however, swam immediately to the edge to empty my boat and get back in. This proved to have been the better decision because I was getting in my boat (half full of water), just as she arrived at the bank. The unknown paddler paddled a good race, and certainly made my race very interesting.

Sophie Johnson

REFLECTIONS OF A NEW PADDLER

BENDIGO CUP MARATHON LODDON RIVER 3RD OCTOBER

The setting for this race is very inviting. Lovely big trees and a beautiful wide river with no wind and the sun shining made for a great racing environment. There was only a small contingent of paddlers from Fairfield but we all had a great afternoon of paddling. The members of Bendigo Canoe Club had everything well organised and made us feel very welcome in their part of the world.

My racing experience had been limited to only two previous races so I was very excited to be getting out on the river again, this time in my own boat which was christened that afternoon. Helpful people on the bank assisted me to launch it and thankfully I found it very stable. My only complaint was that it seemed to lack some horsepower so I will have to work on that! I spent the race keeping a close eye on Lisa in her sleek K1 as she paddled ahead of me up and down the course. I kept on thinking about how Julie Perriam had taught me to "zip" my paddle out and keep my arms up and my other mentor Marg Buck had emphasised the forward reach. So many things to concentrate on as well "racing"! Still I managed to keep Lisa in sight so I was pretty happy about that.

It is always a great thing when other paddlers are able to call out some encouragement as you go along and I have found that to be a nice part of racing. I have spent many years being the support crew for my daughter Jen and now it is a real thrill to see her power past me on the river, only wish I could jump on her wash, but that is not going to happen any time soon! Chris Wharton and Don Campbell were real gentlemen and assisted me out of my boat for which I was very grateful as the legs did not seem to want to work all that well.

Thankfully I was back in time to see the Open field finish and there were some good sprints to the line. All of the Fairfield paddlers had a good day with some good finishes. The Fairfield group all headed off for home but Jen and I stayed to enjoy the pasta night put on by the Bendigo mob as we were going to front up again for the sprints in the morning.

LAKE WEROONA SPRINTS 4TH OCTOBER

We were joined the next morning by two Trinity boys, Will Halliburton and Tim Arnold. We were lucky to have an overcast but not cold day for the sprint regatta. It was very much a fun event and we all had a great time. There was much jockeying for partners and mixed combinations in singles, doubles and the K4s. The races were run in quick succession apart from the delays caused by having to wait on boats being returned for the next paddlers! There was a lot of sharing of equipment and mingling of paddlers which made for a very good atmosphere. Will and Tim paddled strongly and did themselves proud although they both must have been very tired after a very full programme.

I had the thrill of actually paddling with my daughter in a couple of mother/daughter races against an Ivanhoe combination and we won both times. It was quite an experience to be racing sprints and very exciting to paddle with Jen. Dead easy when you are in the back with a machine in the front! It was certainly a learning experience to back up for sprints after the marathon racing on the day before.

I found it to be a great weekend and would encourage others to give it a go next year. The people at Bendigo are a great bunch and provide a good weekend of racing and hospitality.

Margaret Stevens

K4 CHALLENGE



*Daniel Lansell-Kenny, Sophie Johnson, Eliza St Hill and Ali Szlawski.
Photo courtesy Ali Szlawski.*

A sudden decision to paddle in the K4 challenge had us getting the K4s down from the top rack, cleaning off the dust and removing the nests of birds which had made the boats their homes. With some Velcro to secure the seats and a five minute paddle together to test the boat, our preparation was complete!

We headed off to the race at Footscray where six boats were racing in the K4 challenge, three of which contained Fairfield Paddlers. Jen Stevens paddled with Eric Alger (Patterson Lakes), Nicole O'Shea (Ballarat) and Paul Carnegie (Geelong). Their boat took off fast in first place leaving the other K4 boats in their wake fighting for second place. It was my first race in a K4 and after the first 1km, our boat with Daniel Lansell-Kenny, Sophie Johnson and Eliza St Hill (INCC) started running really well. Unfortunately due to their rather wide turning circle, one of the other K4s with Alex Goldsworthy, Will Hallyburton, Vic Langley (INCC) and Nat Salih (INCC) hit some rocks and they were forced to stop and fix their boat before starting up again.

We were in hot pursuit of Jen and her crew for 5km but as a result of a few extra kilometres having been spontaneously added to the race just prior to the start we dropped off from pure exhaustion to complete the 26km ordeal. Nonetheless the experience was very enjoyable, and we came third just behind Jen's team. Alex, Will, Vic and Nat finished not long after in fourth place.

It was a really great day and it provided a good change being able to race in a different type of boat, one that seemed wider than the river, making the turns very difficult. It was also great to paddle with three other awesome paddlers in the back.

Ali Szlawski

LIVING THE DREAM – PADDLING CANADIAN CANOES IN AUSTRALIA

My dream of racing Canadian canoes in Australia started at the registration for the World Masters Games in Edmonton, 2005. I was very excited to return to the town where I had completed 2 university degrees, taught in the Department of Physical Education and been Women's Canadian Marathon Canoe Champion twenty-five years previous to the Games. I had no illusions or even thoughts of medalling; I was simply there, reliving my history.

While standing in the queue, I met an Aussie couple, Jenny and Jonathan Mayne, who were also there for the Canoe events. I was there to paddle in as many races as I could manage. I had only just returned to Canadian Canoeing after a 25 year absence. In a personal search for truth, I had been living and meditating in India following a spiritual Master with a focus on learning all about body energy. During this time, exercise, training and particularly canoeing were all but forgotten. I asked Jenny if she knew of anyone who might be willing to partner in a high kneel C2 with me for mixed sprint racing as my partner for this race was unable to attend the Games. Immediately we hit it off and before the registration process was complete Jonathan and Jenny had planted a seed that became my dream to paddle in the WMG's in Sydney in 2009. Jonathan and I won ourselves a bronze medal in a C2 in Edmonton. He told me women didn't paddle Canadian canoes in Australia. I couldn't understand why, because it is not uncommon for women in Canada to paddle using the high kneel technique. In fact, one of our top women high kneelers, Sheila Kuyper is a Master's Games canoeist and was instrumental in getting international recognition for women's racing for C1 and C2 at the ICF World Championships. They are now working toward eventual inclusion in the Olympic Games.

Fast forward my story to meeting Jonathan and Jenny on the circuit of the World Dragon Boat Championships. First in Sydney in 2006 and then in Penang in 2008. I wanted to see the infamous Murray Marathon from a safe distance and had offered to pit crew for a Canadian team planning on racing in 2007 and both Jonathan and the Canadian team of Bob Vincent and Gwyn Haymen suggested I come and race it myself. Since I could arrange my work schedule to coincide with the timing of the race, I did just that. So last year I braved the half marathon experience in Jonathan's sit down C1. Truthfully, I wanted to prepare for coming to the WMG's and thought that would be a good way to meet people so I could figure out which kind of boats I might manage to paddle for Sydney. I must admit I was worried that there would not be any canoeing events because there were not many people who paddled canoes in the Murray, mostly kayakers. In fact, I was the only woman to paddle C1 in the half marathon. I like kayaking but for me the real challenge has been canoeing. Especially the challenge of high kneeling, not because I am a woman but because it is such a thrill to stay upright in the boat. I have spent and still spend much of my time swimming when I practise in the Super Comp Plastex C1 that I bought in Canada right after the Edmonton Games. It's always interesting, not to mention exciting!

When I learned that no women would be high kneeling, I borrowed Jonathan's sit down C1 boat as it is definitely easier and more like what is used for training in marathon canoe in North America. I'm still faster sitting than kneeling. Women's involvement in canoe paddling will definitely change in the near future. They are coming into their own in Canadian canoeing on the international level now and turning in very respectable times. I cannot count my times as respectable, but hey, I love it and can do it and that to me is what it is all about. People ask me how can I do such opposite things as teach meditation on one hand and then race to the max on the other. Actually, it's a perfect combination of opposites. And opposites do attract.

In the meantime, the Sydney World Masters Games brought my World Championship medal count to a grand total of 43 since I started racing in Edmonton in 2005. What a wonderful way to travel through life, the inner (spiritual) and the outer (Canadian canoeing).

I met some wonderful friends through my experiences in Australia, especially with the Fairfield Canoe Club. Thanks to Jonathan and Jenny Mayne, Kevin Hannington, Liz Jenkins and many others I met. I would definitely say that Canadian canoeing is very much alive, and although it is quiet at this moment in Australia. I have no doubt that it will surface again, probably sooner rather than later.

I plan to be back soon on your waters and in a Canadian canoe! Although the idea of a tiger snake wrapping itself around my paddle as I try to balance on one knee and stay in the boat remains disconcerting. We don't have that to worry about in Canada!

Rama Gilverson

CANADIAN Canadian Canoeist

DEATH ON THE HAWKESBURY

Somehow I managed to be talked into doing the Hawkesbury in a K2 with Marc Bellette. Somehow, Harry Brockwell completed this race in a K1! The story began when Harry took it into his head to compete in the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic, a 111km classic down the Hawkesbury River near Sydney. That may sound tough enough, but then you have to consider that the event takes place overnight, and the river is tidal, so although you may think you are paddling downstream, there are times when you are fighting a 2kph incoming tide. Naturally when Marc first asked if I might want to join him in a double so that Harry would have some fellow FCC members with him on the river, I assumed the event would be held with a full moon, and scheduled so as to get maximum benefit from the tides. Ahh, what foolishness!

Harry, his land crew Rachel Heath, Marc and I and our land crew Judith and Rocky, all converged at the start line on Saturday afternoon, October 24. Things turned ominous when they couldn't locate the number for our K2 and they ended up giving us pieces of paper with the number written in pencil to tape to our boat. This gave us an uncomfortable feeling of doom. Finally, they managed to locate a real number for the boat, but the land crew had to make do with texta and paper to put numbers on the car. We hoped this wouldn't mean they would continuously lose track of us on the river, or not allow our land crew into the checkpoints to feed us!

Harry, Marc and I were all in the last start at 6pm. It started quickly. We quickly passed the first checkpoint at 12.4 kms to a cheering crowd and felt a million dollars. We were in a group with Harry and a few other boats and enjoyed some good wash rides. We reached the 31km mark in quick time still feeling reasonable. There was a slight hiccup as our land crew had to wait 30 minutes for the shuttle bus into the checkpoint so could only arrive a couple of minutes after us. As it was now almost fully dark, and the mobile phones were out of range, it took a bit of yelling out names on a crowded beach before we located one another. We chomped down a few sandwiches, had a toilet break, and got back in the boat.

The next big checkpoint was at the 65kms mark (Wiseman's Ferry) and we again made fast time, arriving at 11.45pm. We took a major break here, received back massages by our land crew and I managed to get down some hot ravioli, and Marc some hot soup as well as plenty of coffee before we motivated ourselves to get back in the boat for the next leg at 12.30am. Our land crew couldn't get to the river now until the 98km mark.

The tide turned against us about 2.30am. Whether it was fighting the tide, or the depressingly long distance till we saw our land crew again; or it was the middle of the night, or the moon was gone and we should really have been asleep – but things got really tough at this point. As expected, Harry proved too fast (and we finally slowed down), and he paddled off into the distance. He was soon no more than a little red speck of light in the dark. There was a checkpoint every 5 or 6kms, which in the main consisted of a boat moored in the river. We would yell our boat number to them, and they would



Anna, Marc and Harry.

yell it back to us, and we would eat a lolly or two and continue on. After some checkpoints it was like a marina with kayaks and canoes drifting everywhere in the dark in silence, everyone happy to have reached that checkpoint and reluctant to plough on into the dark towards the following one.

Suddenly around the 90kms Harry came up from behind us – “Fancy meeting you here!” came his voice. He had stopped at an earlier “pit stop” and was now going to push on to the finish. Marc and I had already resolved to stop to see our land crew at the 98kms mark. Well it was more like I was so desperate to stop by then that I couldn't contemplate NOT stopping at 98kms.

As we hit the beach for that final checkpoint, an official came up to Marc and I and asked, “how are your energy levels?” Marc and I both had the same reaction – Oh my God, we must look terrible and they are going to pull us out of the race!! We both tried to talk it up: “Oh we're not too bad – just a short stop and we'll be right...” The guy then revealed that an earlier competitor had left this checkpoint in the wrong direction and hadn't been seen again. He wanted us to paddle off after him up the wrong arm of the river, and see if we could locate him with a strong torch. “Well, we don't really feel THAT good...” It had been about all I could do to contemplate the final 12.5kms to the finish – I was going to crack if I had to paddle another few kms looking for someone else and what were we to do in a K2 if we found him? I couldn't believe they had no rescue boat there for the officials to use – nothing better than a very strong torch! We declined when some sea kayaks showed up at the checkpoint looking more appropriate for the task.

I think Marc and I spent 30 minutes at that checkpoint warming ourselves by a wonderful open fire, drinking a bit more coffee, and trying to stomach something else to power us through the final hour. Marc finally convinced me that we had to get back in the boat and we took off at a slow rate in total darkness with the moon having set long ago. We were a bit geographically embarrassed when Marc realised that he was reading the map 90 degrees out of kilter. With a slight

2009 AWARDS NIGHT



Rachel and Harry. All photos courtesy Anna Wilson.

detour we were at last off, now glad of the fact that the checkpoints were spaced more closely. In the dark on the river even small lights could be seen for many miles and we navigated mainly by compass and these lights.

In the meantime our land crews were stressing, having to drive 59kms on winding, poorly signed roads at breakneck speeds to try to meet us at the finish (12.5kms by river). Speeding fines are yet to arrive. Is stopping on a freeway on-ramp to read a map legal?

Finally, as it became light again, we could see the bridge that marked the finish line. That bridge looked so close, but it seemed to take a tortuously long time to reach it across a wide shallow section with tidal currents playing havoc with our balance. We paddled and paddled and paddled and wondered if we were making any headway! But at long last we were there, and there was a crowd of volunteers and our land crew pulled us out of the boat. Harry was already there, dressed and chewing on a BBQ'd sausage. WE HAD MADE IT!!

PS: Marc and I completed the event in 11 hours, 45 mins, 35 seconds, and had the indignity of being beaten by a junior female in a K1. Nonetheless, I think we were the best (i.e. only?) mixed K2. Harry completed the event in 11 hours, 4 minutes and 54 seconds, and was the fastest open male K1.

The event supports the Arrow Bone Marrow Foundation.

Anna Wilson, Marc Bellette and Rachel Heath

For the second year the Fairfield Canoe Club annual award night was held in the cosy and friendly atmosphere of the Brandon Hotel. This event is held to acknowledge the sporting achievements of our members over the past year.

This year our combined efforts resulted in FCC winning both the premier and junior trophies for the Winter Series races as well as Trinity Grammar winning the schools trophy. Ninety-three individual FCC paddlers competed in this years winter series races across all the age groups and categories; a fantastic participation rate. Well done once again and hopefully we can maintain the success in 2010.

For the first time ever Fairfield has produced three international paddlers for the Australian Marathon team – Marlana Ahrens, Peta Wait and James Campbell. Well done to all three for representing themselves, the club and Australian kayaking so well overseas!

Congratulations to the following award winners:

President's Award – Liz Jenkins

For her contribution to the clubs success in competition

Szigeti Medal – Marlana Ahrens

The highest accolade the club can award to one of it's members

Member's Award – Rachel Heath

For her contribution to the club activities

Winter series Men's

- 1st Angus Campbell
- 2nd Chris Runting
- 3rd Greg Bauld

Winter Series Women's

- 1st Liz Jenkins
- 2nd Jen Stevens
- 3rd Peta Wait

Winter Series Junior Men's

- 1st Chris Smith
- 2nd Thomas Noonan
- 3rd Liam Downs

Winter Series Junior Women's

- 1st Lauren Watson
- 2nd Sophie Johnson
- 3rd Marlana Ahrens

Junior Development Coaches Award Men's

Nick Roberts

Junior Development Coaches Award Women's

Lauren Watson

Junior Development Encouragement Award

Chris Grundy

Report by Joe Alia

COACH PROFILE

GARY FLANIGAN



Hi Gary and thanks for taking the time to answer a few questions about your coaching role at the club.

Tell me a bit about yourself, when you first began kayaking and how long you have been a member of FCC.

I have endured 69 tender years on this earth and enjoyed most of them, particularly the last nine after starting kayaking in June, 2000. I started kayaking when our daughter Sarah was taking her fiancée, Graham Sim, down to FCC to be introduced to the sport. Prior to commencing kayaking I flew gliders but was gradually withdrawing from the sport as I felt the need to undertake more physically active endeavours – not to mention that my piloting skills didn't seem to be improving.

By trade I am or was, a Turner and Fitter having completed a five year apprenticeship in a ship repair workshop. By attending nightschool during my apprenticeship, where I studied for a Diploma of Mechanical Engineering, I qualified as a Marine Engineer, holding various 'tickets' issued by the Department of Transport. After completing the apprenticeship I continued on at nightschool to complete the Diploma by which time, 1961, I decided to concentrate on becoming a management executive.

Whilst I have held various management positions over the years I continued to combine work and nightschool. I actually found that I enjoyed attending nightschool where every subject gave a new insight into areas. I finished up with a couple of diplomas, a Graduate Certificate in Finance, two degrees and an MBA.

What level coach are you?

I am a very inexperienced Level 1 coach. I actually did the course – which incidentally, I highly recommend – to improve my own technique, not really to undertake coaching of others around the Club. That being said, and it is only my opinion, I reckon I could offer some interesting pointers – to the less experienced 'sprinters' – in regards to short distance sprint racing.

Do you have any other paddling-based credentials eg: certificates/committee positions.

Yes, along with a number of other FCC members I attended the AC accredited 'Officials course' conducted by CV. Again this is an excellent course and I say that in all sincerity, not just because I happen to be a Director and the current President of Canoeing Victoria Inc.

Apart from your own paddling during the week, how often do you coach other people? Can you briefly explain how your role fits into the overall coaching program at FCC?

Interesting question; sadly my role as a person who happens to have a coaching qualification does not at this stage, fit with any FCC program. I really don't coach anyone at all, but I am working up to undertaking some in the future. As might be known, I normally paddle with 'ol Kev (Hannington) or Werner (Boltz) or Liz (Jenkins). The question then becomes, have you ever tried to coach any of these individuals? Not one of them listens to anything I say and one often repeated phrase is 'I am in the front, I command, you follow and do it properly'!

What do you look to improve in individuals with regard to technique and style?

To be fair, given that at this stage I don't undertake or provide any formal coaching to others, I must give the question a 'pass', but I actually feel an affinity with sprint racing more than marathon. What would I like my students to achieve? Given that I believe that most paddlers in sprint racing of the same veteran age group or indeed, in any category, travel at approximately the same speed during the race, I believe that a Sprint race is won in the first 5 to 10 metres. That being said I would like to concentrate on starting technique. After the start of course, there comes the actual race and that requires good technique, strength and stamina.

This is my favourite question. Describe the satisfaction you gain from a training session.

Funny really, given I have not at this stage coached anyone and have only made feeble attempts to coach Jenkins and Hannington (which is an exercise in futility). My normal reaction upon completing a training session is simply 'now their orders and ordering can stop'. Actually, I am normally their personal student so on the receiving end rather than offering advice. Paddling with any one of them is a very rewarding experience and I enjoy all our sessions together immensely. I must say though that Liz recently took heed of my request – which is about the only time on record – during the recent World Masters Games when we paddled together and won the Mixed 55 Plus TK2 200m event. Previously we missed the start of the 1000m and were comfortably in front in the 500m when we hit a batch of absolutely 'dead water' which knocked us back to fourth place. We recovered enough to come second. In the 200m we were again comfortably in front but under threat. When I asked Liz to increase the paddle rating, she responded magnificently and we 'literally flew away from the opposition' – well done Liz!

Lastly, what's next on the paddling calendar for Gary Flanigan? Will you be doing the Murray Marathon again this year?

"After competing in the recent World Masters Games in Sydney, I had been considering giving it all a bit of a rest, but who knows, I do enjoy both the competition and the social interaction of the MM. Also, the fact that CV have a minor part in the 2009 and future MMs, as President of CV I consider that I have a duty to at least attend, even if I don't participate. I have done one full distance MM in a TK2 with Werner. Werner is a great paddle partner and he dragged me the whole boring distance. Werner and I have much in common, we are both marine engineers and neither of us speak when exercising, so when we did the MM together, we enjoyed some 400km of absolute silence!

I have done a number of MMs as a member of relay teams and find them very enjoyable. So will I do another MM? Certainly! I will just need to get invited to join a socially active but competitive team to start the adrenaline flowing.

Interviewed by Roger Tralaggan

TREASURER'S REPORT

At the first meeting of the new board the budget for the Canoe Club was set for the financial year ended 30th June 2010. The income range is expected to be in line with the past few years. Membership fees have remained static while the number of members continues to grow steadily.

The main impacts on the budget this year are the landing repairs and the club boat repairs, both anticipated to be around \$10,000. Capital expenditure for the year includes three new K2s and two new K1s for the intermediate fleet (approximately \$15000), a new BBQ (already purchased), a guard for the outboard motor, gym equipment and a laptop computer to assist with the administrative tasks carried out by board members. Finally the board has committed to the carrying out of a review of the proposal to extend the clubhouse.

The board will look forward to reporting actual expenditure against budget to the membership base at the next AGM.

Michael Kane

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Social Committee has had another very busy year in 2009, the highlights so far being the Trivia Night in May and the Awards Night in October. This has all been arranged with a significantly reduced committee consisting of Marg Buck, Robyn Ward and Rachel Heath, with assistance from some very helpful club members. Our two remaining events this year include the 90th Anniversary Celebrations on Sunday 29th November (see flyer on front of newsletter) and the traditional Christmas BBQ, to be held on Sunday 20th December.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Robyn Ward, who is standing down from the committee after many years helping to organise FCC social and fundraising events. With Robyn's departure the Social Committee is seeking some new committee members to assist with FCC events. If you would like to join the help please contact Rachel Heath on 0403 177 253.

Rachel Heath

Director – Social and Fundraising Committee

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

I have only recently taken on the role as chairman of the Communications Committee and already I am impressed by the amount of fabulous work the existing members of the committee have been doing. The main contributors have been Darren Ryan, Julie Perriam, Michael Loftus-Hills, Jen Stevens, Roger Tralaggan, Marc Bellette, Alex Goldsworthy, Scott Whiffin and Anna Wilson. Together they have produced high quality newsletters, weekly enews mailings, maintained the best canoe club website around, controlled the club noticeboards and continued working on the club history project.

We are currently looking for an editor for the newsletter for 2010 and to make it easier will only be producing 2 editions, with more content going to the website. So please let me know if you are interested. Of course comments and feedback about this newsletter is also welcomed.

Tony Payne

LANDING UPDATE

If you have been down at the club over the last few months you will have noticed much of the landing has been barricaded, with timbers removed from most of the western end. This work is in preparation for a major upgrade of the old section of landing which had started to show significant signs of decay. In particular the brackets that hold the steps at the western end are severely corroded and need replacing.

In order to decide on the appropriate methods, members helped clear away the timber and mud so the steel beams could be examined. An external engineer was hired to give us a professional assessment of the level of corrosion and possible solutions. With the engineers information in hand Alex James set about designing replacement components. After the engineer assessed several different designs we have settled on a simple method of attachment to the existing beams without the need to cut them. The attachments and brackets can be seen at the club.

In future months we will be calling on members to help with the refurbishment and whilst it will be a significant project the more members who lend a hand will see it finished safely and in a timely fashion. Remember – without a solid landing the canoeing amenity at the club would be significantly reduced.

Next time you see Alex at the club let him know what a great job he is doing. The amount of work required for the design, assessment and purchase of the materials is enormous – a fantastic effort by a very skillful club volunteer.

Tony Payne



FCC landing under repair.