

Newsletter

SUMMER ISSUE – DECEMBER 2001



Another successful Big Bash



- Christmas BBQ Sunday 16th December. See Santa in a C10 •
- Murray Marathon Information Night Thursday 13th December •
 - The BIG BASH a full report •
 - Canoe Polo teams in the finals •



Fairfield Canoe Club Newsletter

The Fairfield Canoe Club newsletter is published five times per year.

Contribution deadline for next issue

20 February 2002

How to contribute

All contributions to the club newsletter are welcome – photos, articles, letters to the editor, humour, advertisements. Articles can be supplied on disk (Mac or PC). Disks and photos will be returned.

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear Fellow Paddlers,

Welcome to the new lean and mean newsletter. To make sure we can get all the important information about canoeing out to members quickly we are slimming down the newsletter. The emphasis will be shifting from reporting of things that have been and gone towards letting more forward looking you know about events you can get involved with.

What about all those wonderful reports of exploits on the Murray River Marathon, the epic tales of touring adventures that have graced these pages and bought so much enjoyment over the years I hear you say. Well keep writing those wonderful articles as we anticipate publishing an annual bumper edition.

We have squeezed in an article on the social event of the year, the Big Bash, which almost marks a change in the paddling season as daylight savings kicks in and more friendly faces join the hardened regulars, who paddled throughout winter, and come for a paddle after work. It also marks an increase in new members as many people join to get involved in major paddling events such as the JLL Challenge and the Murray Marathon. All in all it's a great time of the year to be paddling.

See you on the river and Merry Christmas.

Andrew McConnell, aka Mr Mavic.

A couple of big thank you's

Thanks to Ian McCurdy for providing the earth moving machinery used at our recent working bee to resurface the carpark.

Thanks to all the other members who also assisted on the day in the general clean up.

And finally thank you to all those who helped run the recent Victorian Championships.

Report from the Chair



by Annette Kendall

Hello from the new Chairman (and yes I am happy being called a Chairman).

Well everyone it is a great honour for me to have been granted the opportunity to take up this role within such a wonderful club – and I am looking forward to the challenges and, hopefully, achievements of the coming year.

First of all I would like to sincerely thank last years board for all their hard work – in particular on the side fence and kitchen projects which due to the efforts last year we have been able to complete just prior to the main summer season. I know that although a number of last years board are no longer Directors they are planning to continue to contribute to the club in many ways – and I would like to thank them for their continued support.

I would also like to welcome the new Directors to the Board (and thank Steve for staying on the Board) – the enthusiasm and energy displayed by all members thus far has been excellent and I am sure that throughout the course of the year this will enable us, with the help of other club members, to improve the facilities and team spirit within the club.

So what I hear you ask is this group of people who call themselves Directors hoping to achieve?

Well firstly we would like to see as many people as possible benefiting from/contributing to being a member of the club. On the premise that many hands make light work we are keen to encourage any members whether they be new or old to put forward suggestions for improvements and to get involved with some of the sub-committees which we are setting-up/formalising. Details of committees to be formed and the vacancies on these committees will appear later.

Generally speaking there are a number of areas which the board intend to focus on within the next year (the items below are in no particular order).

Strengthening the sense of friendship and community within the club by ensuring that we continue to expand upon the great work done by the social committee last year in organising a number of club social events.

Completing the upgrade of the exterior of the club by re-surfacing the car park at the front of the club and replacing the gate and fence in front of the club. We will also hopefully be able to do some long awaited landscaping to develop the grounds leading down to the river.

Racking facilities/club boats – as most of you are aware there is a current lack of convenient racking spaces as well as a number of club boats that could do with repairing/upgrading. We will be putting a lot of emphasis on trying to progress in this area to provide adequate convenient racking and club boats in good condition.

Inside the club – following the upgrade with the new kitchen we are planning to develop the upstairs area into a more functional meeting location so that there are good facilities to enable the Directors and members of sub-committees to meet in comfort at the club.

Communication within the club – we are hoping to upgrade our boards/notices within the club to make communication between members and from sub-committees/the Board of Directors a lot easier. We are hoping that this will also help foster more participation in activities organised by other clubs/the VCA and for working bees etc within the club.

The history of the club – we are extremely fortunate to have a club with so much history – and are hoping that we will be able to give a greater understanding of the club history through photos of yesteryear and articles about the good old days.

Skills development/racing – not forgetting that we are actually brought together by a desire to canoe/kayak we will be continuing to develop coaching facilities within the club and encouraging members, both new and those with years of experience, to improve their paddling skills further. We will also be promoting the winter/summer series and multi sport events which involve a kayak/canoe leg for those members who enjoy trying to go faster than other boats around them!

As you can see from the outline above there is a lot we hope to achieve in the next 9 months – and there are no doubt many more suggestions, so please help by letting us know what you think can be improved/what you like – and by volunteering for sub-committees / working parties.

Anyway, that's quite enough from me for the moment – other than to wish all members a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR – and to those of you heading up to the Murray River on the 26th – I'll see you there!

The Big Bash

By Sarah Flanigan. Photographs by Roger Tralagga.

A night of splendour, elegance and rivalry. That pretty much sums up another successful Fairfield Canoe Club 'annual do'!

At the post party low-down over a few excess bottles of bubbly the Social Committee went through personal highlights of the evening.

Our as ever shy and retiring Chair, Joe Alia, quipped his personal fav moment as 'pushing it hard' at the auction. Peter Thompson who pretty much put the whole fundraising aspect of the night together also found the auction to be a highlight and just the atmosphere of fun with people still mingling and laughing at the end of the night.



Secretary Sarah Flanigan and Nicola Thompson having fun counting the nights takings.

The belle of the ball (and winner of every conceivable award on the night), Rose Curtis, favourite moment was the joy (aka relief) at seeing it all come together. Michael Kane and holder of the money, thought that nothing could surpass Tony Payne's 'livecross' from Europe, stupendously executed by Roger on the 'banks of the Yarra' and backed up by the latest technology.

My personal highlight was just the dancing and the dancing and the dancing. Seeing everyone getting up to there on the dancefloor to shake a tailfeather is unsurpassable.

There are so many people to thank and if I forget just kick me but George and Sharon Wakim and their children, Daniel and Madeline, were just amazing in picking up the balloons in the afternoon of the party, putting together the table decorations, helping Joe and Peter put up all the ribbons (does it never end).

Janice Lane has to be thanked for being a fantastic MC. She carried it off with great aplomb and made the official ceremonies flow smoothly.



Chairman Annette Kendall and Chris Sando enjoying the evening.

Meron Scott, although unable to attend on the night, was an active behind the scenes worker taking care of the tickets.

Zoli and Tony Payne have to be thanked for their great speeches and for their good judgement in giving their respective prizes. Zoli can still tell a good yarn or two and Mick Gayfer's acceptance speech was fantastic and embraced the whole club. Tony's decision to give Rose the President's award was spot on as she has given so much to the club both on and off the water.

Finally though the entire Social Committee was in agreement on one thing — how fantastic it was to see old and new members mixing together. It says much for the future of the club when you see that level of involvement and friendliness.



Blondes having fun, Jenny Hill and Mandi Colliet.

Club Awards

As usual the club awards were presented to the winners at the Big Bash. Unfortunately Trifon was overseas again and missed the presentation.

Presidents Award	Rose Curtis
Under the Yarra	Rose Curtis
Winter SERIES	Rose Curtis and Trevor Archibald
Coaches Award	Mick Gayfer
Champions Trophy	Trifon Skortchev



Rose Curtis accepting one of her many trophy's from Bass Wakim.



Mick Gayfer accepting the Coach's Award from Zoli.



A happy Wayne Cook with some of his Christmas shopping, a present for Jeremy.

Supporting our sponsors at Christmas

Many companies donated goods to help raise over \$1300 for the club at the Big Bash. With Christmas coming up and a lot of presents to be purchased over the next few weeks please support our sponsors, listed below, as they have supported our club this year.

Mountain Designs (*Collingwood & Hawthorn*)
Kathmandu (*City*)
Snowgum (*Hawthorn & Mitcham*)
Eastern Mountain Centre (*Hawthorn*)
Bakpakka (*Elizabeth Street City*)
Blackburn Cellars
Capacity Sports
Outsports
Unfair Advantage
Canoes Plus
Westgarth Cinema
Kookaburra Sport

What's on this week

Christmas BBQ Sunday 16th December

Fairfield Canoe Club invites you to it's Christmas BBQ 12.30pm at the club 16th December.

Snags and bread provided. BYO other meats, drinks, kids, fun, \$5 present for Kris Kringle.

If you are good, the jolly man may appear!
Ho Ho Ho!

Thursday Sessions

Thursday Night Training Session 5.30–7.30pm.
Run by Margaret Buck. All are welcome.
Recommencing after Christmas break in mid-January.

Zoli's famous Sunday Sessions recommence on Sunday 6th January.

Murray Marathon Info Night Thursday 13th December 8.00pm at the Club

Overview of the Murray Marathon and hints and tips from those who have done it before.

Relay and full distance.

Both on and off the water activities will be covered.

Come along and meet the other members who you will be seeing on the Marathon.

Bring \$5 for pizza if you will be hungry.

Any questions please contact Andrew McConnell aka Mr Mav 9416 1189.

The Amazing Amazon turn around

by Sarah Flanigan

We spit on the wooden spoon of yesterseason! The Amazons have vindicated their legendary namesakes and finished the Canoe Polo season with a solid fourth place in the ranking. There was no deviousness in this transition from wooden spooners of the previous season to finishing this time around one win short of the finals. We fielded exactly the same team: Attacker Alli, Devious Phil, Shane 'The Berserk' Cavagna, Sneaky Kelly Kaos O'Shannassy, Lean and mean Lisa Ellis, 'Don't tussle with me' Julie Camillieri, and; last but not least yours truly, Sarah Flanigan.

The secret of our success is pretty simple...teamwork. Entering our second season we actually started to understand the game and how each of us fitted in. Some of us are fantastic in defence like Kelly whilst others are unstoppable in attack like Shane. Lisa has found her own as

goalkeeper stopping the seemingly unstoppable opposition attempts at goal. There are others like Julie and Alli who are versatile and can move to defence from attack with apparent ease.

Next season we shall line up minus a much valued teammate, Phil Griffith's, who has left us for the bright lights of that northern metropolis, Canberra. This season he achieved his ultimate aim of scoring a goal, not once, not twice, but three times. Actually it could even be more but it all became so commonplace by that stage that I stopped counting.

As a team we have decided to play one more season in novice and really improve our skills. I think then the confidence will be there for an easy move to E Grade soon after.

Last season wooden spoon. Next season the world!

Gladiators in the finals

by Brendan Kenna

After a consistent season the Gladiators finished 3rd on the E-grade ladder with 9 wins 1 draw and 4 losses. There was plenty of excitement at this prospect as we had beaten the 2nd side Urchins and drawn with the top side OXO during the season.

Greg Blackman, Rohan Mostert and myself did a warm up session at the club house and then got to the Brunswick pool in good time to test out Alex Lesniowski and Paul Kenna with some shots against the wall using the park bench as a boat. There was a positive mood about but it was a bit eerie playing in daylight for the first time. We waited for 3 lots of extra time from the Novice semi – it's not easy to keep the adrenaline happening when the game is delayed for 15 minutes. From the start everyone put in a huge effort but we couldn't convert. We sprayed the goal and only landed 1 goal in the first 17 minutes.(a great long shot from Alex backing up superbly)

We trailed 2-1 and fought hard with Greg in total control on the charges and Rohan picking up plenty of possessions and making space. It was a close match between 2 good sides. We dug in and persisted and picked up 2 quick goals in the last minute to win. Warren Procter had snuck down the pool to receive my long throw and goaled with 20 seconds left.

Smiles all round as we had made our first Grand Final!

Gladiators in The Grand Final

There was a break of 2 1/2 hrs in which we watched A, B, C, D grade's semis. We we're keen to do battle with OXO (aka Melbourne Uni). We caught them cold and had 2 goals on the board to 1. Things were looking good with Paul keeping a tight goal and everyone paddling hard. The defence of Alex, Rohan and myself was working well until Eleanor's sister Kate snuck through to equalise forcing us to extra time.

We had 3 minutes each end to get through. Both of our 2 supporters we're cheering rowdily. But they were a bit drowned out by the hoards of M.U. Mountaineering Clubbers lead by the double agent "Jimbo". OXO burst out and scored 2 goals in the first 3 minutes. They followed up with another early in the 2nd Extra time half. By this time we all

looked pretty tired – especially Greg who had charged successfully on every occasion. We needed a bit more fitness and maybe another sub (Brentin McRae who helped get us there but was away on business could have helped). These guys were about 22 year olds and it showed! Warren again gave us a glimmer of hope with a goal but we needed 2 goals in a minute and couldn't get there. We all learnt plenty and basically it was great fun getting in the finals as underdogs. Thanks everyone for making it happen.

Polo plans

by Brendan Kenna

Polo Plans for the new year – full details of pre-season training for D and Novice players and likely Come and Try days will be announced soon after the polo sub-committee meets. These will be an excellent opportunity for members to try out the polo boats and have a bit of fun. Keep an eye out at the Christmas party as there could be some canoe polo boats about.

There is a 3 on 3 competition in January at Latrobe Uni which is excellent, I'm told. There will be a team entered in the hand tackling category. Novice players can enter to play without hand tackles – let me know if you're keen. We have also had offers from coaches of other clubs to assist at our training sessions as guests. I have just completed the Polo Coaching Level 1 and we will be able to lift the standard of training and tactics considerably this season. And there's plenty more...

Coaching training

Julie Perriam and Neil Grierson completed a Level One Flatwater Coaching Course back in October. Brendan Kenna has also been improving on his skills and is now a Level One Canoe Polo Coach. Susan Ramus, a new but experienced paddler, has just successfully finished a Basic Skills Kayak Instructors Course. With such a helpful group of people covering a wide range of new kayaking skills the future continues to look good for coaching at the club.

New members

Too many to mention! A lot of new faces have appeared over recent months on the river. We have also had a couple of old favourites rejoin after a year or two pursuing other interests.

It was great to see several members new to kayaking enjoying the paddling leg of the JLL Challenge down past the club to the finish at Southbank. Many race experienced members passed on advice to our novice racers as well as generously providing boats for those who don't yet have a boat of their own.

The up coming Red Cross Murray Marathon has also brought the usual influx of new paddlers to the club with Fairfield fielding at least two mixed relay teams of people who began paddling with the club this year. Other new paddlers are joining up with race proven specialists to tackle the Murray in relay teams or in the TK2 full distance class. We hope you enjoy the challenge.

So, welcome to all the new members, officially, and we trust that you will continue to be made welcome by all members of the club.

Club boat repairs

Neil Grierson has again taken on the important task of keeping the club fleet afloat so that beginners can enjoy their paddling. Lofty had been taking care of the fleet and restored some order to the club boats, thanks Lofty. To assist Neil, if you are using club boats, please try and keep them reasonably clean and complete. If there is any accidental damage to the boats, or parts missing, please record the details on the club boat notice board downstairs. If there is any major damage please contact Neil on 9489 0556.

Up coming events

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 13th December | Murray Marathon Information Night
8.30 pm at the Club.
\$5 for Pizza if you are hungry. |
| 16th December | Christmas BBQ
12.30 pm at the Club. |
| TBA February | Launch of New Season |
| 3rd March | Clean Up Australia Day |

Clean up Australia

Keep your diaries free...another Clean Up Day is approaching. Last year many people enjoyed a morning of leisurely paddling picking up rubbish from the river bank. Some got so carried away as to retrieve tyres complete with wheels – but this is purely optional.

Clean Up Australia Day – Sunday March 3rd

9am–12pm followed by a BBQ

Its a good chance to have a go of the fun boats, we'll have the C7 & C10 on the water.

What a load of Rubbish

by Kelly O'Shanassy

So you are paddling peacefully along the Yarra, the sun is out, the birds are singing and then out of nowhere, the tune of water gently lapping against your kayak is rudely interrupted a piece of trash wedged on the front of your boat! You then run the risk of capsizing or (more importantly) looking like a total git while you bounce up and down, trying to free the trash from your bow.

Well, fellow paddlers, the Victorian Government has heard your pleas for help and has handed over \$22.5 million to prevent trash (amongst other things) polluting our waterways. Now the Governments main aim in cleaning up the river may not be to appease any irate paddlers but it's an added bonus that they just can't deny. Apparently the main aim is to protect the environment and the little animals that share it from poor health. The Platypus is a key icon of success and the aim is to protect the little fellas from litter as many have been found dead, strangled by six pack plastic holders and plastic bags.

So, thanks to this money you should see less trash in the river and more of it in bins and litter traps along the Yarra.

You can help by throwing your rubbish in bins and by dobbing in anyone you see littering from their car. Simply take down their license plate, make and model and location of the trash throwing incident and go to www.epa.vic.gov.au and report them. This way you help to clean up the river! Of course another first hand way to clean up the river is to get involved in the clubs rubbish collection on Clean Up Australia Day on 3rd March 2002.

Stay tuned next time for some handy hints on how to wee in your kayak and not impact on the river.

Who are the Paddies?

by Chris Sando

The Paddies are back in force again in 2001 with three teams entering the Murray Marathon in the favoured and highly competitive mixed open relay class. This class has produced some legendary teams in the past such as The Dogs, The Black Betties, The Sharks, The Good the Bad and the Ugly, and of course, the infamous Smegs. We also have Andrew McConnell and Pete Thompson entering the gruelling full distance TK1 event this year who will paddle the whole 404km single-handed.

The three relay teams allow paddlers of all standards a chance to enter the Murray Marathon with our third team consisting mainly of beginners, the second team of intermediate paddlers and the first team of more experienced paddlers wanting to have a crack at a podium finish.

We are a group of Fairfield Canoe Club members, brought together by a passion for the outdoors, a sense of adventure and trying to keep fit in the process. The team this year consists of approximately 30 paddlers (15 guys, 15 girls) and six support crew, most of whom are also keen cyclists, swimmers or runners.

Previous Murray Marathon honours achieved by the team include:

- 1998 Third place Mixed Open Relay
- 1999 First place Mixed Open Relay
- 2000 First place Women's Open Relay
- Second place Men's Open Relay

We have just taken delivery of our third Unfair Advantage TK2, from the proceeds of this year's fundraising events. The design brief was to come up with a discreet, conservative design, and not stand out too much on the water. I think we have achieved that...watch out for the new Paddy 1 boat plying the Yarra on a regular basis between now and Christmas! The Paddy fundraising events not only help purchase new boats, but equally importantly help maintain the fleet in a condition ready to race. We seem to have kept Melbourne's fibreglass industry in business this year with several visits to the repair yards of Seaford and Carrum Downs.

Since their humble beginnings in the 1995 Murray Marathon with one borrowed TK2, the Paddies have raised over \$30,000 for the Red Cross through their sponsorship and fundraising. This year alone we will contribute over \$9,000.

Tense negotiations are currently underway with last years sponsors to clinch much sought after and highly valued advertising space on the back of the Paddy t-shirts. (Mascot Cycles, Musashi and Lowan Health Foods). Hopefully we will be well endowed with bike shorts, energy bars and breakfast cereal.

The pre-season draft has been in full swing with some big names retiring and some welcome returns to the fold. Some big transfer fees were involved, but we're hoping to stay under the salary cap. Some notable trades were –

- out Brendan Kenna (took a wrong turn at Chandler Hwy) in Shawn Ramraj
- out Rae (baby) in Kyllie Douglas
- out Rusty (under the thumb) in Geoff Higgins
- out Xena (MIA) in Jo Chapman – Xena's alter ego, Nicola Thompson, is still heading to the Murray but this year it is as a support crew for the Number 1 "Daddy Paddy" Peter Thompson.

With 3 weeks to go training is now reaching fever pitch so that we can be in fine form for the main event...the Murray River Paddle steamer cruise. A welcome break from the rigours of paddling at the half way mark in Echuca. Seriously now, all three teams are firing up to give it their best shot...Go Paddie...Paddle Hard, Party Harder!



Members of Team Paddy celebrating with their third place medals in the recent Cobram 40 miler. Photograph Kate Lee.

UNDER THE YARRA

K1 Klub

Interest in the K1 Klub continues to grow. Glenn Anderson has recently taken the plunge and acquired a K1. Glenn and Chris Sando then took several plunges out of the K1 and into the Gunbower Creek during a "training" weekend at Cohuna.

Rachel Heath has also been sighted in a K1 looking poised and graceful, as you would expect.

The editor also wishes to announce that he has been baptised into the K1 Klub, by the usual full submersion ceremony, several times! Bring on summer!

Carbon fibre eating rats

There have been reports of rats chewing the ends of carbon fibre paddles stored downstairs at the club. An in depth investigation into this problem by Neil Grierson revealed that the damage was due to enthusiastic paddlers hitting the occasional rock with their paddles and that, thankfully, the club room is free of rats.

Cross training and lawn mowing

Many of you thought we were joking when we suggested mowing the lawns at the club was a great form of cross training used by elite paddlers. Mick Gayfer and Jenny Hitchcock have been regularly mowing the lawns since and reaping the benefits. This was recognised by Zoli in awarding Mick this years coaches award for the most improved paddler.

This is evidence of the benefits of helping out around the club.

Another Big Baby

This time it is a 9.1 lb "whopper" as it is lovingly referred to by Alex Lesnionski. Raelene gave birth to a gorgeous girl, Ebony Page, on Thursday 29th November. All are doing well. So well in fact that I heard a rumour that Rae and Alex are looking for a support crew come baby sitter so that they can paddle together on the Murray.

Don't be shy!

We want to know what you've been up to – contribute an article to the next FCC Newsletter.

**Contribution deadline:
20th February 2002**



ZOLI'S FAMOUS SUNDAY SESSIONS

10am – 12 noon every Sunday – rain, hail and especially shine at the club and upstream to Zoli's Strait.

Come and bash it in at these friendly training sessions.

Restarting 6th January 2002.

Christmas BBQ Sunday 16th December

Fairfield Canoe Club
invites you to it's Christmas BBQ
12.30pm at the club 16th December.

Snags and bread provided.
BYO other meats, drinks, kids, fun,
\$5 present for Kris Kringle.

If you are good, the jolly man
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Any questions please contact
AndrewMcConnell aka Mr Mav 9416 1189.



Fairfield Canoe Club Co-operative Ltd

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