

Annual Report

For the Financial Year Finishing 30 June 2015

Clubs

Canoe Tasmania and its three affiliated clubs have remained strong and sustainable over the 2014-15 year and we are in discussions with a potential fourth club which is seeking to affiliate. If this proceeds it will further strengthen the association. Membership however, has fallen slightly compared to previous years. This is attributed to teething issues with the new AC membership system. As AC resolves these issues and club volunteers become more familiar with the system we expect membership to climb to its previous levels.

Education

Through the Australian Canoeing Award Scheme education program we have continued to provide a wide array of courses covering flat water, white water and sea skills and instructor training. These courses help introduce people to canoeing in a safe and enjoyable fashion, and provide basic- through to high-level instructor skills which maintain and increase the spread of good, safe, canoeing techniques and practices.

We again offered River Rescue with the course being over-subscribed despite it being run in the depths of winter. Feedback has been incredibly positive and we will continue to run further river rescue courses.

This year again saw collaboration with the Tasmanian Sea Canoeing Club to bring an international standard sea instructor to the state. These sessions were well supported and we will continue to work with them as the partnership is mutually beneficial – lowering costs for both and enabling the highest calibre instructors to be employed.

This year also saw development of Australia's first Pack-Rafting Course. This relatively new discipline is growing rapidly in popularity with bushwalkers and expedition kayakers. The first course is scheduled to run in October this year and it has proved so popular a second course has been scheduled for November to meet demand. We have also had interest from interstate for CT to run the course for them. Congratulations to Alex McWhirter and Mark Oates for their initiative in developing and marketing this new course.

The Canoe Tasmania Development Officer also has been assisting the Derwent Canoe Club with the administration of its Paddle Power program. Similar assistance is available to other clubs should they request it.

Community, Sport and Recreation Tasmania continues to support the education program strongly with its grant assistance, keeping courses affordable and helping to maximise attendance and the benefits arising from this.

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Recreation

Recreational paddling continues its growth with whitewater, sea, lake and estuary paddling being increasingly popular for fitness and general recreation. Derwent Canoe Club has followed Tamar's lead and is scheduling regular novice to intermediate "under 3" trips as a pathway into paddling. There are also many, informal paddling groups meeting for regular social and training paddles at many venues across the state. A continuing challenge is maintaining our enviable safety record and somehow reaching the legions of sit-on-top and beginner estuary/sea paddlers who pose risks to themselves through poor skills and potential lack of awareness of canoeing's inherent risks.

Water Access

Hydro Tasmania continued its dam and power station maintenance which affected key waterways including the Mersey and the Forth. This restricted competition and the education program's venue options throughout the year, creating logistical challenges which we nonetheless worked around. Fortunately maintenance on Meadowbank assisted us by providing much lower and more usable summer water levels at Broken Bridge. Hydro Tasmania has, as always, been incredibly helpful and supportive within their maintenance and generation limitations, and Canoe Tasmania thanks them for their ongoing support of canoeing.

Competition

All clubs in the state have continued to run a wide array of events, including Slalom, Flatwater (Sprint and longer races), Ocean Racing, Wildwater Racing, Xstream Racing. Well over 50 competitive events are now conducted each year, and these run throughout the year, meaning there is rarely a week without a competition paddling opportunity somewhere in the state.

Canoe Polo

Canoe Polo competitions are also well supported in the north and south of the state with over 20 weeks of roster competition each year and state championships now held in three successive years. Canoe Tasmania remains hopeful that Tasmania will again field teams in the National Championships as it did previously.

Slalom

The Slalom Development Program, primarily located in the south, coached by Peter Eckhardt and David Borojević, has gone from strength to strength, with strong pool of young paddlers making their mark nationally and internationally. Four Tasmanians – Kate Eckhardt, Daniel Watkins, Jake Hodgkinson and Rohan Borojevic – represented Australia at the World Junior and Under 23 Slalom Championships in Brazil.

Daniel and Kate in particular are making their mark, winning a range of international medals in competition this year. Daniel Watkins has also been selected for the Senior Men's team to compete at the World Championships in London.

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Significantly, and due to the work of our Director of Coaching, Peter Eckhardt, we have entered into a partnership with Australian Canoeing and the Tasmanian Institute of Sport to employ a dedicated Slalom Coach. We welcome Jonathan Davis to the team and look forward to further growth and success in this area.

Wildwater

The Junior Wildwater Development Program, primarily in the north-west with Bruce Cameron coaching has continued to produce quality, with local paddlers Tom Mountney and Luis Wilson selected in National team which competed at the Junior and Under 23 World Championships in the USA in July/August 2015.

Ocean Racing

Ocean racing has also continued strongly with a big selection of races each summer – both twilight and longer sea-breeze ocean races almost every weekend. This is supplemented by strongly supported Flatwater races over winter.

Flatwater & Sprint

Both sprint and 10km races have remained very popular. Coaches Stuart Paine and co. in the north west and Chris Blackaby in the south have a stable of young, fast paddlers, and an increasing variety of quality sprint boats coming into the state. The inclusion of Tasmania in the national pathway strategy for Flatwater, and the additional mentoring and support for local coaches via the Coach Connect arrangements continues to benefit this discipline.

Xtreme Racing

In Xtreme Racing the Lea Race continues after 11 years as Australia's premier Xtreme race, along with its newer cousin – the North Esk Paddle Fest. The NEPF in its second year on August 2014 was huge success, but unfortunately low rainfall saw it cancelled for 2015.

February 2015 saw Cataract Gorge again host a well-supported Xtreme race giving the state three high quality Xtreme events.

National Competition

In October 2014 Canoe Tasmania hosted the 2015 Australian Wildwater Championships and national team selection races. These events were held at the Mersey and Brady's Lake. Suitable water was unavailable later in the year or in the new year, hence the Championships was brought forward three or four months. The Championships were supported by a grant from Community, Sport and Recreation Tasmania, and ran at a profit despite smaller entry numbers than usual due to the event timing.

A small sub-committee of Derwent Canoe Club members and the Chair of Canoe Tasmania also commenced planning for the 2016 Australian Slalom and Wildwater Championships and the 2015 Australian All Schools championships which will be held at the Mersey, Forth and Brady's Lake in the first two weeks of January 2016. For the first time these events are being run in conjunction with another state – Western Australia.

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W.A has been unable to host national level slalom or wildwater racing events since the loss of their course at Harvey. Planning and conduct of the events is being shared, as is financial risk and profits. Although this will half CT's potential income from the event (unlike other states, we have *always* run these profitably) the sharing of the organisation burden makes this a worthwhile cost of partnership.

Hydro Tasmania has agreed to provide another 100 Hydro branded bibs to support the event. Grants will also be sought from Community, Sport and Recreation Tasmania and Events Tasmania to help defray costs and to enable assets renewal and course maintenance.

Mersey Course – MOU with Parks Tasmania

The restructuring of Forestry Tasmania has seen the land around the Mersey Whitewater course transferred to Parks Tasmania. For 40 years Canoe Tasmania and local clubs had worked closely with Forestry Tasmania on development and maintenance. Parks Tasmania have been approached regarding a Memorandum of Understanding covering use, maintenance, facilities and such like to give Canoe Tasmania greater surety over what we may and may not do in our use and maintenance of existing facilities. Parks Tasmania is amenable to such an arrangement and has already assisted with site maintenance following damage caused by heavy snow and in preparation for the 2016 National Slalom and Wildwater Championships.

Finances

Canoe Tasmania remains in a strong position financially and due to good membership numbers across the clubs we kept affiliation fees low again in 2014-15, financially benefiting clubs and strengthening their ability to fund activities and equipment for their members. Our Treasurer, John McCausland has provided efficient management of funds and with our Auditor, David Marshall, has significantly improved our financial records. With stable or growing membership and ongoing support from Community, Sport and Recreation Tasmania for our Development Program, we look forward to a strong 2015-16.

Board and Officials

The Canoe Tasmania Board and Officials for 2014-15 has been:

John Borojevic - Chair	Phil Watkins - Secretary
John McCausland – Treasurer	Mike Shaw – Board Member
Adam Dickinsen – Board Member	Andrew Bennet – Independent Member
Development Officer – Su Sprott –	Director of Coaching Peter Eckhardt –
Hydro Liaison – John Borojevic	Auditor – David Marshall.



John Borojević

Chair – Canoe Tasmania Inc.

19 September 2015

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