

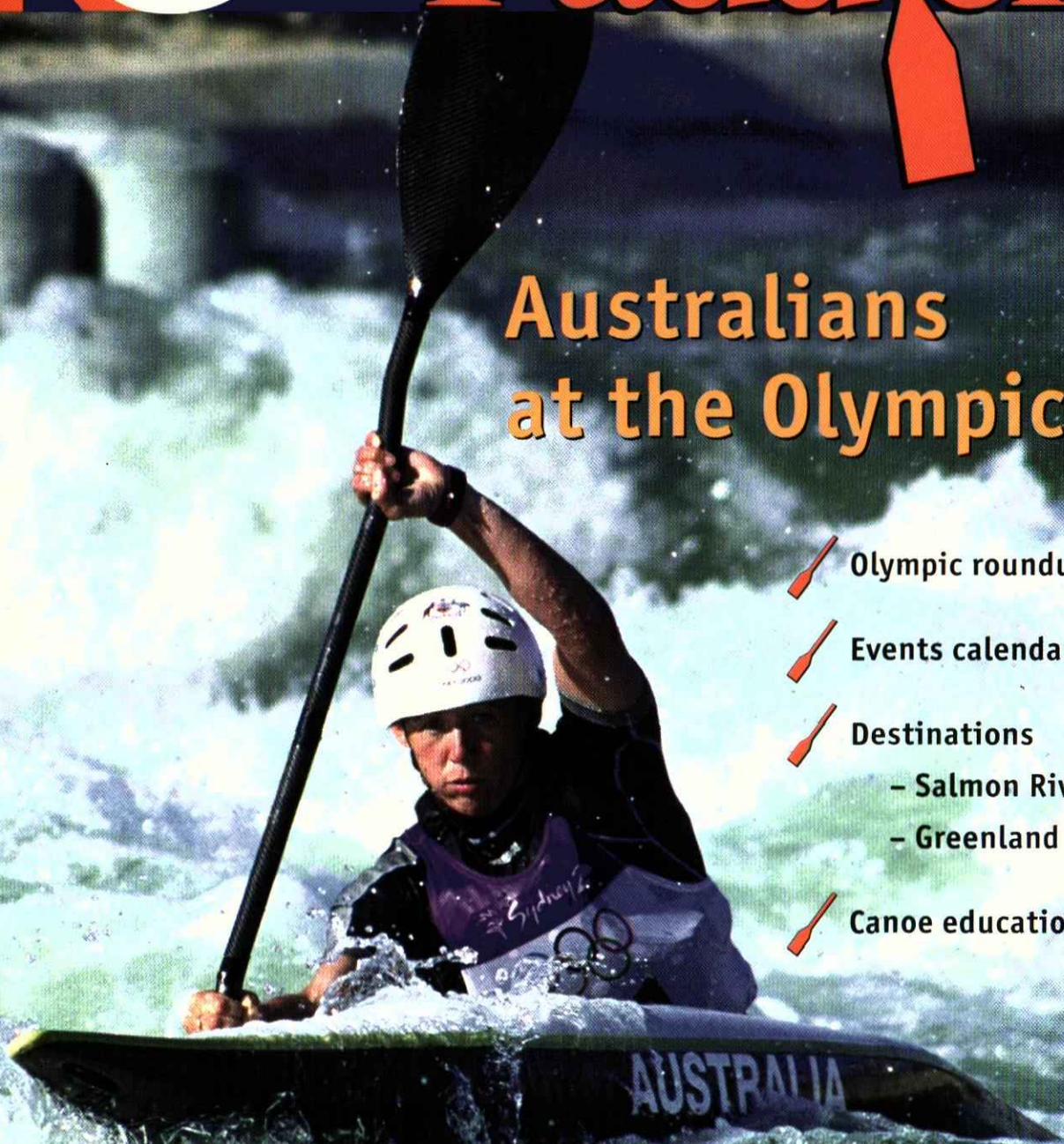


# Paddler



## Australians at the Olympics

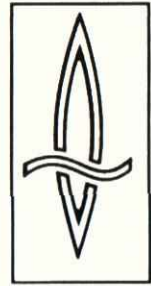
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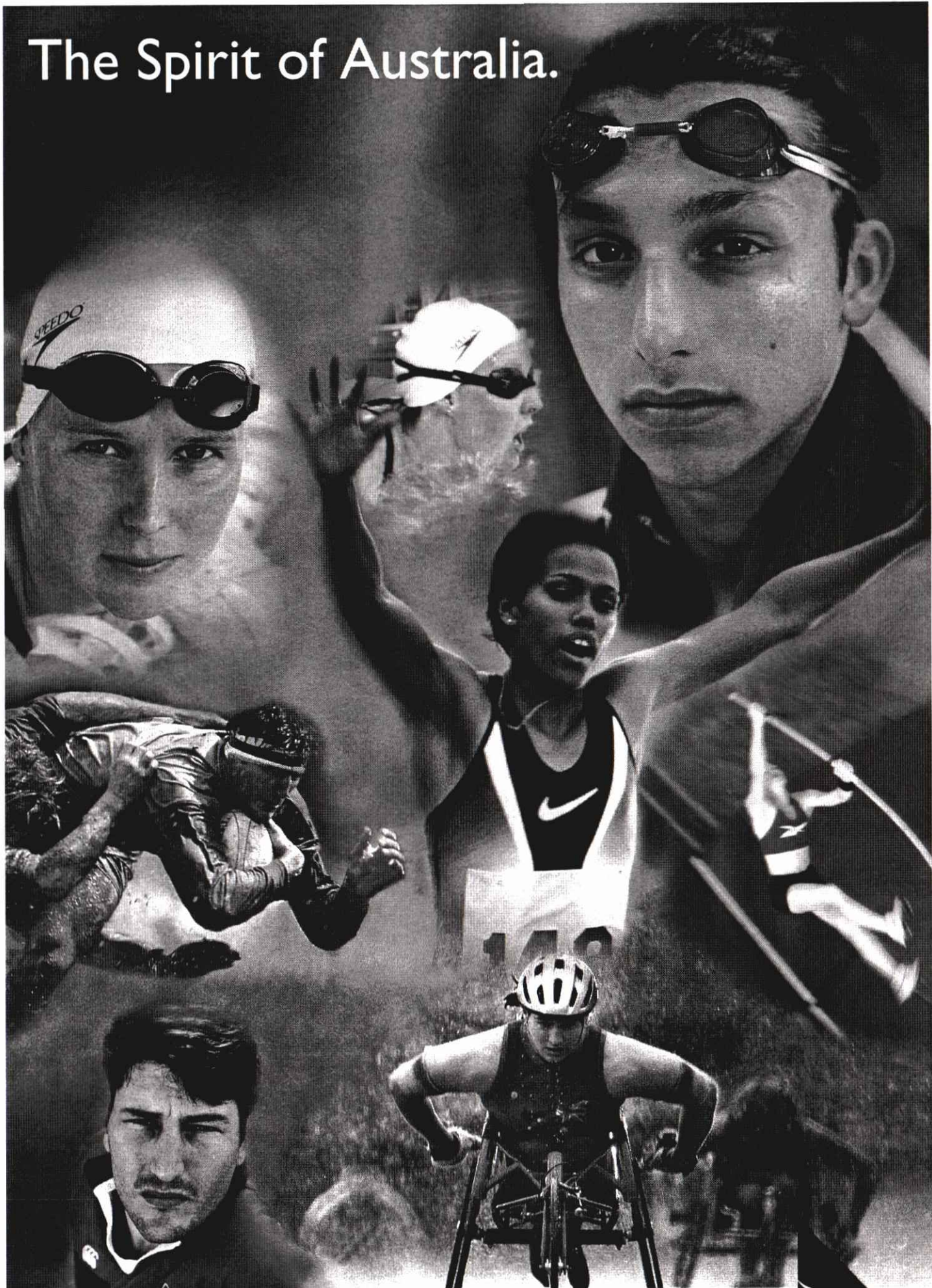
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Front cover: Danielle Woodward. WK1.

Small cover photographs: Left Andrew Trim. Photo Wim Wijdekip.

Middle: Jan Brecka and Petr Prochazka – Czech Republic C2 – 4th place in C2 500 m semifinal.

Right: Anna Wood and Katrin Borchert K2.

Above: MK1 slalom – Manuel Koehler, Austria – 6th place.

Photos: Sue Price, except small cover photo of Andrew Trim.

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kayak&canoe

**KC** magazine

**Paddler**



### KC – Kayak Canoe

#### Magazine of Australian Canoeing Inc.

KC is published four times per year by Australian Canoeing

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# FROM THE EDITOR

This Olympic Special is a once-off joint issue of **KC** and **Paddler** Magazines. We feature a Olympic roundup by slalom and sprint coaches Richard Fox and Barry Kelly. Also in our Olympic section regular contributor Stephen Schaefer profiles Amanda Simper from the Olympic women's K4 crew. All of the articles are complemented by great photographs from Sue Price.

Peter Dingle and Kevin Noble have contributed to this issue with articles on sea kayaking in Greenland and rafting and white water kayaking in north America. We have also regular features from both **Paddler** and **KC magazines** – including the Canoe Education update and the national calendar of canoe events for 2000–2001.

I have supported the joint issue of **KC** and **Paddler** as the first step in the creation of a truly national magazine. While this **Olympic Special** is a once off publication, I urge all State canoeing organisations to consider becoming involved with the creation of a permanent National magazine.

**Michael Loftus-Hills**

## **KC subscribers – Australian Canoeing**

After some consideration it has been decided to take **KC Magazine** to a quarterly magazine rather than the current bimonthly format. This is to allow for more information of interest to paddlers to be in each issue, giving you the reader better value for money.

Existing subscribers who have purchased 12 month subscriptions will still receive their full 6 issues of the magazine.

## **Paddler subscribers – Canoeing Victoria**

To celebrate the Sydney Olympics Canoeing Victoria and **Paddler** are proud to be part of the special joint publication with **KC**. This is a memorable issue and we hope it is enjoyed by all readers. Canoeing Victoria (VCA) is committed to the importance of **Paddler** as a promotional and communication tool for and to its members. All options and opportunities are currently being explored to improve the content, distribution and benefits of **Paddler** to members in 2001. If you have an idea or input towards this objective please ring Eric Ward at Canoeing Victoria.

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## President's message



*Greg Kaeding and his wife Christine.*

**Photo: Australian Canoeing.**

May I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this "Special Edition" of **KC Magazine**, Australia's premier paddle sport magazine.

With this issue we not only welcome our new editor but also feature the Sydney 2000 Olympics and our first joint venture with **Paddler magazine**.

I trust that the initiative with **Paddler** magazine will not be the last joint National and State magazine initiative and will continue the Board's endeavours to further repair the two-way information between Australian Canoeing office and the member states, particularly members at club level. For too long now there has been a restricted flow of information between the canoeing membership and the Board and Council of Australian Canoeing and it has been most rewarding over the last 12 months to see the feedback from the regular releases through Australian Canoeing's "E-News", the initial edition of Oz-Canoe News and of course **KC Magazine**.

However I do urge members to continue to contact the Australian Canoeing Office directly when they have concerns or issues which they do not understand or are seeking resolution on and failing that give members of the board or myself a call.

I would like to personally thank the Council Members that attended the mid-year meeting in Sydney, not only for the positive feedback on the direction of Australian Canoeing as we plan for the next Olympiad, but also at the workshops conducted. Many thanks and I look forward to similar co-operative workshops and meeting in the future. The board is committed to a strong and clear governance role for the organisation and is especially sure that the new staff members in the ACI office will enhance the management capabilities. I welcome to the office Paul Sheppard and Amanda Whittaker to the roles of Project Officer – Awards Scheme and Client Services Officer respectively.

The Board held a Strategic Planning Workshop in June and the staff are in the process of further refining the plan and developing a business plan and budget to support the

plan's objectives. Council comments at the mid-year meeting have been taken into consideration and I look forward to feedback on the final document when circulated. As with any plan, not everyone's objectives can necessarily be incorporated, however it is important that as many viewpoints as possible have the opportunity to be presented and can be considered.

With no doubt the highlight of my first 12 months as President has been the success of the 2000 Olympics. Whilst the Olympics to date is restricted to the two canoeing disciplines, the results achieved have enhanced Australia's reputation as a force in international canoeing, not only in the competition area, but organisationally as well.

Just to see Men's C1, Men's C2, Men's K1 and Women's K1 in the slalom competition and ranked so highly over the last 12 months is rewarding in itself, but to see it in such a spectacular environment as the Penrith Whitewater Stadium in front of 14,000 passionate Australian spectators was something else indeed!

And our successful sprint paddlers as well. Never has Australian Canoeing been represented by so many paddlers at Olympics and this performance did us proud. Whilst the occasion did not meet the personal expectations of some athletes, the reality is that the last four years of sport canoeing in Australia has been the most successful in Australia's history. My congratulations to all Olympians, their committees and the management and staff that supported them.

My congratulations to all officials and volunteers for Australian Canoeing that made the Olympic Canoeing competition the outstanding success that they were. Well done!

Despite these successes, we are ever mindful of the opportunity for improvement at that end I have announced a review of the slalom and sprint high performance programs of the last four years. The review panel will be chaired by former Olympian and ACI past President Graham Johnson. I urge all athletes and staff of the last four years to take the opportunity to contribute to the reviews in writing, and if possible in person. All submissions will be taken and considered individually and will be treated in confidence by the panel.

To fellow paddlers and supporters I hope to see you at the 2000 National or perhaps on the water next time I'm your way.

# Our contributors

All of our contributors have submitted articles without payment. Australian Canoeing and Canoeing Victoria thank the following authors for their contributions.



**Stephen Schaefer**

Stephen Schaefer is a freelance sports journalist with a management background. He enjoys writing about the characters in sport and is a regular contributor to **KC magazine** with a focus on sprint racing. Stephen also writes for **Triathlon Sports** and **Sports Woman** magazine.

## Kevin Noble

Kevin took up kayaking in his early fifties. He joined a Sydney canoe club to further his skills and after 5 years, became a Basic Skills Instructor and started a whitewater instructors course. Kevin met his wife Laura on a club paddle a couple of years ago and they were married in November. The paddle in the States was an early honeymoon.



## Peter Dingle

Peter (seen above – middle) was introduced to sea kayaking in England in 1983 and he has been “nibbling at it since”. Peter is a member of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club and has run training courses for members on surf, navigation at sea and participated in numerous club trips. Peter is a lecturer in Outdoor Education and Nature Tourism at the La Trobe University, Bendigo campus.

## Sue Price

Suzanne Price comes from Brisbane and was an official media photographer at the 2000 Olympic Games for canoe slalom and sprint. An avid canoeist, Sue has been a physical education and outdoor education teacher, is also a

registered whitewater canoeing instructor and a former representative in canoe polo and slalom. Her photos have been published in various print media including **The Australian**, **The Courier Mail**, and on the covers of **KC Magazine**.

## Noel McMahon

Noel has worked for Melbourne's Triple M and has always had a keen interest in running, swimming and as a tennis player and coach. Noel writes for **Sports Weekly** magazine and has freelance writing credential for magazines in Australia and the USA.

Currently Noel is a member of the Melbourne-based Jones Triathlon club, and a TriVic Board member.

## Liz Broad

Liz worked as a sports science coordinator for 3 years. Liz is a qualified dietitian who has specialised in sports nutrition since 1994, and who worked at the AIS in Canberra between 1994 and 1997.

## Barry Kelly

Barry has toured with seven national teams and competed at the Moscow and Los Angeles Olympic Games. Barry attended 3 Olympic Games as a coach and has been AIS head coach and programme manager, Gold Coast, since 1989. Barry's aim and obsession is to assist and guide Australian competitors to become a world force in kayaking.

## Richard Fox

Richard Fox has been the national slalom coach since 1998, and head coach at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. As a member of the ICF Slalom Committee since 1996, he was instrumental in securing the inclusion of slalom in the Olympic program for Sydney. A 5-time individual and 5-time team world champion for Great Britain, Richard is married to former French world champion and Atlanta bronze medallist Myriam Fox. They have two daughters and live in Emu Plains, close to the Penrith Whitewater Stadium.

## Peter Horne

Peter Horne is development manager responsible for the management, operation and coordination of kayak and canoe in Australia. Peter, who has been with Australian Canoeing for two and half years, coordinates and implements the AC Scheme.

# Kayak and Canoe

## SYDNEY OLYMPICS

Australian Olympians  
Canoe and kayak slalom and sprint



### Sprint

*Anna Wood and Katrin Borchert.*

- **Katrin Borchert** Women's K1 500m 3rd
- **Nathan Baggaley** Men's K1 500m Semi Final 4th
- **Katrin Borchert** and **Anna Wood** Women's K1 500m 6th
- **Daniel Collins** and **Andrew Trim** Men's K2 500m 2nd
- **Shelley Oates-Wilding, Amanda Simper, Kerri Randle** and **Yanda Nossiter**  
Women's K4 500m Semi Final 4th
- **Clint Robinson** Men's K1 1000m Semi Final 5th
- **Luke Young, Brian Morton** Men's K2 1000m Semi Final 8th
- **Ross Chaffer, Shane Suska, Peter Scott** and **Cameron McFadzean**  
Men's K4 1000m Semi Final 4th

**Photo: Sue Price.**

### Slalom

- **Danielle Woodward** Women's K1 8th
- **Robin Bell** Men's C1 9th
- **John Wilkie** Men's K1 21st
- **Andrew Farrance** and **Kai Swoboda** Men's C2 11th

# Olympic roundup – sprint

**Barry Kelly** Head coach 2000 Olympic Team

## One percent makes the difference

*Sprint kayaking had its most successful Olympiad ever. Barry Kelly reviews the performance of sprint in Australia and ponders on the success of various selection procedures.*

### World Championship and Olympic results during the High Performance Plan 1997–2000

Event	K1 500	K2 500	K1 1000	K2 1000	K4 1000	LK1 500	LK2 500	LK4 500
1997	5th	1st	8th	7th	3rd	3rd	3rd	9th
1998	Semi	6th	Semi	4th	6th	3rd	1st	9th
1999	Heats	3rd	11th	8th	10th	6th	10th	6th
2000	Semi	2nd	Semi	Semi	Semi	3rd	6th	Semi

*A recent history 1997 to 2000.*

*This Olympiad represents the most successful period in Australian Canoeing history, if we were to measure success by the number of medals taken during this period taken at World Championships.*

### The most successful Olympiad

Australia was one of only four countries to qualify for all kayak events for the Olympic games in Sydney. **In 1997 the Australian canoe sprint team achieved its best medal haul – seven medals in both Olympic and non-Olympic events. In 1998 the number of medals decreased to two medals and in 1999 (the Olympic qualification year) only two medals were won.**

History shows that Australia, in 2000, maintained its average of two medals per Olympics over the period from 1980. With these results we have had our most successful Olympiad ever, even including the much maligned selection policy and procedures.

### Funding

In general terms, the majority of sports in Australia are allocated monies on the results obtained at international competition.

Since 1988 sprint canoeing has attracted funding of significant proportions, through the agencies of the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Olympic Committee, due to the results achieved by series of talented athletes and coaches.

### Australian Medal tally since 1936

**(Canoeing was introduced to the Olympic programme at the Berlin Olympic Games)**

• K2 10000 m (Bronze) – 1956 – this event is no longer contested • K1 500 m (Silver) • K1 1000 m 3 (Gold, Silver, Bronze) • K2 500 m (Silver, Bronze)

• K2 1000 m (2 Bronze) • K4 1000m (Bronze) • LK1 500 m 1 (Bronze) • LK2 500 m (Bronze) No medals have been won in LK4 500 m. Total of twelve medals.

### A recent history from 1997–2000

(see table above)

### How athletes measure success

Not all participants in sport measure success by the number of medals obtained in competition. Some athletes measure success by Olympic selection, a personal best time or just making a final. Some athletes just enjoy the thrill of pushing themselves to achieve their best, with sport offering the vehicle to achieve this end... they do it for the fun aspect!!! Whatever the motivation, at some stage the performance has to be measured!

In the Games of the 26th Olympiad (Atlanta 1996) Australia achieved the enviable results of 3 Bronze medals and finalist in all kayak disciplines. With the 27th Olympiad expectations were to emulate these impressive statistics and perhaps to exceed the former!

A detailed system of empirical data, gathered both at home at abroad, coupled with an ample financial support network, which encompassed the realms of technology (Sport Science/Sport Medicine) and equipment advancements, all indications that these predictions were realistic and attainable.

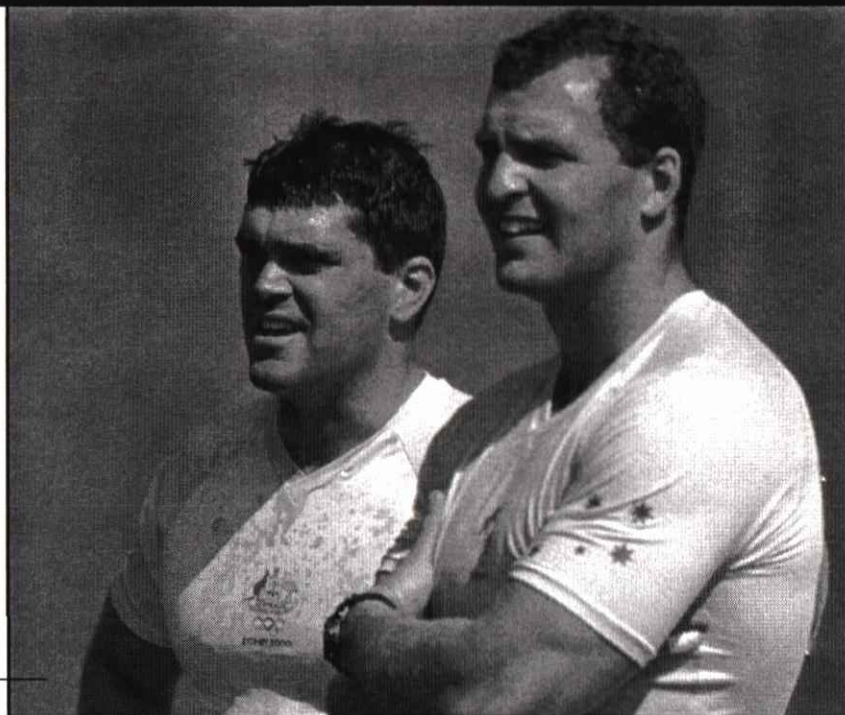
# Olympic roundup – sprint

Australian "Team of the Year", Andrew Trim and Daniel Collins – Silver Medallists K2 500m. Hungary's Zoltan Kammerer and Botond Storcz won the gold medal. The Hungarians were part of the 1999 world champion K4 crew.

Hungary 1:47.055  
Australia 1:47.85  
Germany 1.48.771

*Their preparation was fantastic... they raced very well... Andrew Trim and Daniel Collins were simply beaten by a better crew on the day.*

**Photo: Sue Price.**



## Sydney 2000

The Sydney "home" Olympics created an environment of such intense pressure that any finalist, let alone a medallist should be lauded for a fantastic performance. The pressure of family, tickets for friends, own expectations not matched to realistic goals, media commitments, contribute to the extra pressure that a uniquely, modern home Olympics attracts. Some of these factors were evident in Sydney.

Athletes were given a very small window of opportunity in which to perform. Many years of dedication were on very public display. The gun goes and what you have imagined for those countless hours of training flashes before your eyes. It is over in a split second. In many ways this race can be compared to life itself!

What really stood out for me at our Olympics was the acknowledgement and appreciation of the spectators and TV viewers, into how intense Olympics are. For athletes to make finals was seen as a great achievement, and the performance level to take a medal becomes far greater than ever imagined! This was the personal experience that all could witness and more importantly, feel! Only the best athletes on the day could rise to this momentous occasion.

## Australia, Hungary and Germany – different systems of selection

Of the fourteen countries that won medals at the Sydney Olympics, Hungary and Germany were by far the dominant nations, sharing in the medal tally, with 7 medals each (Hungary 4 Gold, 2 Silver, 1 bronze and Germany 3 Gold, 1 Silver, 3 Bronze)

These impressive measurable results lead to questions such as, Is it their systems? Is it their population base? Germany (90 million people), Hungarian's (12 million) Are they fitter, stronger? Are they technically more adept? Do they attribute more resources to their historically successful and high profiled sports?

Or is the answer contained in their Disciplined CULTURE, where the Umpires decision is, Final?!

There is no single easy answer, yet my belief is, that each of these countries identifies qualities that all athletes no matter which country must portray.

These are some of the traits in successful athletes I have identified over many years of observation:

- Longevity and persistence
- Passion – enjoyment, confidence and desire
- Goals – clearly defined, measurable and timeframe
- Technical and tactical abilities
- Physical prowess
- Adaptability
- DISCIPLINE

It has been my experience that without the necessary discipline, all of the traits of a successful athlete as mentioned above, count for nought.

Some aspects of Discipline can be defined as:

- Persistence • Courage • Perseverance • Control
- Focus • Working hard and working smarter • Trust

## What does it all mean?

Knut Holmann (Norway) was an unbackable favourite in 1992 to win the K1 1000m, yet he was defeated by a brash

## Olympic roundup – sprint

young Australian athlete who had not succeeded at the World Championship level prior to winning in Barcelona – Clint Robinson. This defeat has led Knut Holmann to try to douse the festering fire of his disappointment in 1992, by winning in 1996 and courageously winning both K1 events at the 2000 Olympics. His is a story of discipline and perseverance.

Over the past 10 years our own successful 2000-Olympians have conquered disappointment. They have shown the discipline required to come back from retirement, or to change country, to take medals over the past Olympiad. For example Daniel Collins moved from a successful international K1 career (93' K1 500 m Bronze, 94' K1 500 m Silver) to team with a former team mate, Andrew Trim, who was induced from retirement after Barcelona. This partnership over the past four years has yielded many international successes. Their "formula" for success is built on many of the traits mentioned above!

Katrin Borchert has successfully transferred her "discipline" approach from her native country to her adopted homeland. Her "formula" is different to those athletes mentioned above yet it contains many of the same ingredients and is applied in a manner that suits Katrin!

What makes the difference in these athletes? What puts these Australian athletes ahead of the people, who occasionally defeat them domestically, yet, to date, cannot repeat it on the international stage? Is it lifestyle? Motivation? Ability?

**“What really stood out for me ... was the acknowledgement and appreciation, of the spectators and TV viewers, of how intense Olympics are. For athletes to make finals was seen as a great achievement, and the performance level to take a medal becomes far greater than ever imagined!”**



*Katrin Borchert (back) and Anna Wood.*

*Katrin Borchert – Women's K1 500 m. Bronze Medal  
Italy 2.13.848*

*Canada 2.14.646*

*Australia 2.15.138*

*The Australian Canoeist of the Year Award was awarded to Katrin Borchert. Katrin's performance over the period included her Olympic Bronze medal and being a finalist in the Women's K2 500 m with Anna Wood.*

*ACI President Greg Kaeding said "Katrin Borchert is a most deserved athlete who has been dedicated and committed in her personal pursuit of excellence since coming to Australia. This award acknowledges her achievements of the last Olympiad and in particular her bronze medal at this year's Sydney Olympics."*

**Photo: Sue Price.**

# Olympic roundup – sprint

## My Philosophy

Put simply, my belief is that these athletes consistently do the 1% of things that can make a difference to how they perform, and get used to winning! They make it their habit! They also know within themselves that they cannot possibly change 100% of everything, but they can seek to change some things by at least 1%. Athletes have adopted physiotherapy and massage as part of the 1% advantages to be gained, these are some simple examples of what athletes have chosen to do to improve. Their culture and philosophy is characterised by continually and constantly adapting to be at the forefront of their chosen sport.

Evolution and growth is a PROCESS that does take time! Their mindset becomes not a question of not will I succeed, but when will I achieve.

For example, 1% faster for a K1 1000m of 3m 40s is 2.2 secs or 2 boat lengths. What does it take to get a 1% performance improvement? It just does not happen overnight.

Clint Robinson in 1992 was asked what it would take for him to win in Atlanta, he replied "I would have to paddle a 3m 28 sec's to win". At the time this appeared not to be an achievable goal! History would show that he went 3m 29s and the winner went 3m 25s. This was a performance improvement of over 2%! This illustrates that he had a very long-term plan for his predicted success, yet unpredictably two highly performed athletes ultimately usurped him. BUT he had a plan and was working to achieve it! Very much like the moves of a Chess Grand Master and exhibiting the discipline and foresight to follow his strategy and convictions with well planned moves already predicted. His vision!

Remember that there are no guarantees that there will not be someone better out there!

These people who have enjoyed success at Olympic and World Championship level will always strive to achieve more from themselves in everything that they do!!! There is not ONE thing BUT a series of many little things. They have concluded that these things, what ever they are at some stage, WILL Count!!! The 1%'s are different for everyone and there is no MAGIC formula masking the hard work embodied in great performances!

However, it appears that some athletes do seek the "Magic Formula" via the Pharmacy. The spectre of drugs was evident at this Olympic games and tarnished the performances of many "clean" athletes. In sprint canoeing rumours and innuendo circulated through the media have indicated that our sport has a serious and dangerous

problem that demands immediate eradication. It appears that some people and "systems" will take this easy road to gain the unfair advantage!

## The best of both models

So how do the most successful countries at the Olympics, Germany and Hungary, select their teams, and can we adapt the working parts of their model to suit our system? We need to step back and take a hard look at what was working for us and how to bring these cultural changes back to the "coalface".

Hungary has a system of 2 out of 3 wins gets the spot at the World championships or Olympic games. In 1996 this same system produced one men's kayak medal, yet in 2000 it was very successful producing a total of seven medals. Germany on the other hand selects a squad and the athletes are put into boats at the Head coach's discretion. This system has operated successfully for a number of Olympiads.

Whilst approaching selection of their National teams from a differing perspective each of the two systems is characterised by a systematic and disciplined approach that is supported by all and sundry. To put it simply, they accept the umpire's decision or they leave the process. The rewards are awarded to those who perform.

Our system has been developed in conjunction with athletes, coaches and administrators and has operated relatively successfully for the smaller boats (K1 and K2's). In essence our current system selects winners in a similar way to the Hungarian system, and these athletes have gone on to perform successfully on the international stage. No one system is totally successful due to the unearthing of very talented individuals. This country has untapped talent and needs to unite to have a national focus to explore all manner of combinations to discover the best boats to represent us.

No selection system is perfect, each system (German and Hungarian) has points for and against, but they have adapted over time to suit. The Olympics brings unique athletes to the fore and this can destabilise even the best organised of nations. The winners wherever they come from will always have completed 100 x 1% to succeed. Our aim in the next period is to identify and develop those athletes who are TOUGH, willing and able to do the 100 x 1%. There are sacrifices to be made and changes to be adapted to!

# Olympic roundup – slalom

**Richard Fox** Head coach 2000 Slalom Team

## A River of Dreams

*Richard Fox provides a summary of the slalom competition at the Penrith Whitewater Stadium*



*The C2 pair of Kai Swoboda and Andrew Farrance at their first Olympic Games.*

**Photo: Sue Price.**

### Let the Games begin

In September 1997 at the IOC headquarters in Lausanne Francois Carrard, the IOC Director General, announced that the IOC had agreed to the request of SOCOG that canoe slalom be included in the program for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. The words were filled with meaning for thousands of slalom supporters around the world and worth driving 500 km to hear. Three years later the Penrith Whitewater Stadium was still filling to near capacity when the announcer pumped up the crowd with the words "Let the Games begin!" Finally, it was real. Four days of competition for 83 athletes from 21 countries. The most exclusive paddlers' party ever.

Qualification for the Games had begun with a few surprises at the 1999 World Championships in Spain. The system allowed one boat per country in each class plus an additional boat for the top few nations. Compared to up to four boats per class at a world cup or world championship this was a tough first hurdle for many teams and athletes.

**"Finally, it was real.  
Four days of  
competition for  
83 athletes from 21  
countries. The most  
exclusive paddlers'  
party ever."**

## Olympic roundup – slalom



*Robin Bell, a home town favourite for the 12000 spectators at the Penrith Whitewater Stadium.*

**Photo: Sue Price.**

In the final analysis the first six places in C1 went to 3 countries and 75% of all the medals went to countries with 2 boats in a class.

Following the qualification of places at the Worlds it was down to national qualification and the excitement raged over the Internet as athletes watched the dramas unfold, first in France and Germany, then in Britain and the USA. Beating a World or Olympic medallist was the only option in some cases, "don't stuff up" was the survival motto for favourites in other countries. With a few exceptions the selection process was wrapped up following the World Cup in Penrith at the end of April.

After the years of lobbying and fundraising the dream was alive and the scene was set. An electric current ran through the crowd in anticipation of the first boat on the course, and by the time Robin Bell jumped the first drop towards the end of the C1 class the crowd was fully alive and kicking. Without exception the encouragement of all of the Australian athletes was phenomenal and one of the most powerful memories of the Games. On the first day our job was to qualify both Robin Bell and Danielle Woodward for the finals and despite a few nervous moments for each athlete this goal was achieved.

### **The course layout**

Whilst the competition organisation was faultless and a tribute to the skills and dedication of an army of organisers and volunteers, the course design was not without controversy. The International Federation course

commission had designed a course with eight upstreams as opposed to the habitual six and a running time 20 seconds or so more than usual. The team managers voted to delay the course approval for the finals a move which resulted in a faster course better adapted to the TV schedule and closer to the norms of the past four years.

### **Favourites show their form**

The first day of finals went to form. Frenchman Tony Estanguet was the favourite and established a convincing lead after the first run. Robin Bell went stroke for stroke with Estanguet for three quarters of the course but struggled in the wind to exit the upstream at gate 19, losing precious time. The distraction was costly as he then picked up a penalty with two gates to go. The dream of a medal slipped away in that simple moment. 5 seconds off first and 2 seconds off third at half-time. From the start, the second run was hard work, the boat wasn't gliding and consequently every stroke was an effort. The finish line expression said it all.

Michal Martikan the reigning champion was almost four seconds behind the lead in 5th and put the pressure on Estanguet with the fastest run of the day to move into the overall lead. Juraj Mincik, the second Slovak slipped in another faultless run and moved into second beneath the shadow of his teammate. For Estanguet the motivation was clear, brother Patrice had won an Olympic bronze in 1996, teammate Emmanuel Brugvin was the reigning world champion lying in third, but Tony Estanguet was the man

# Olympic roundup – slalom

in form, it was his race and he wasn't going to let the advantage slip. The second run, marred only by a single touch, was otherwise like everything else about Tony Estanguet, impeccable.

First run penalties on gates 9 and 16 had proven costly but, cheered on by thousands, Danielle Woodward's last run on the course was clean and precise moving her up to 8th place in her third Olympic Games and the team's best result. This performance was also her best result in a major championship since 1992. Brigitte Guibal from France had the narrowest of leads after first runs and nearly threw the whole game away with a capsized before the last gate. With only Hilgertova out of the top five boats improving on second runs, Guibal was able to hold on to second place ahead of teammate Anne-Lise Bardet. Bardet was a late addition to the French team as a replacement and her performance shows their depth of talent in this event. Following on the back of her Atlanta success and the 1999 world title, Stepanka Hilgertova, mother of her training partner, 13 year old Lubos junior, became the only slalom athlete to win two Olympic gold medals. Her persistence, and ability to go clean under pressure have clearly set her above the rest at the major races in recent years. Hilgertova was never troubled on the course and built a solid base with her first run before unleashing the fastest time of the day second time around.

## When the going gets tough

The third day was always going to be tough. And so it was for Dave Ford the world champion, who failed to qualify, tough also for the Spanish who were one of four kayak nations to have qualified a second boat at the world championship, they too went out early. It was tough for John Wilkie, Kai Swoboda, and Andy Farrance. Tough but worth it. Wilkie had the speed on both runs until the final quarter when errors at the bottom of the course proved costly. The experience will no doubt reinforce the need for sharper concentration and technical discipline over the coming seasons as he continues to improve. The C2 pairing of Kai Swoboda and Andy Farrance set off hard paddling confidently and aggressively showing that after three seasons in the boat they had the pace to make the Olympic finals and mix it with the best but unfortunately penalties once again kept them out.

So to the final day and a cocktail of stunning performances, missed gates, eskimo rolls, tears and euphoria. In the C2 event the brothers Hochshorner from Slovakia blew the rest of the field away with a phenomenal second run taking the overall lead and laying the gauntlet

down for the 1996 Olympic Champions, Adisson and Forgues from France. The French pair responded like true champions – committed and fearless under pressure. At gate 18 the French still had an advantage but were racing on the edge picking up a touch and then finally coming unstuck with a 50-second penalty on gate 21. The Slovakian supporters erupted at the nation's second slalom gold in its short Olympic history and its third medal in Sydney – only the French could equal that performance in 2000.

## The man of the moment

In the kayaks Paul Ratcliffe of Great Britain did everything possible to throw the race away, touching a gate on each run and capsizing at the finish. Nevertheless, his raw speed and technique earned him a silver medal. Ferrazzi from Italy also fell in and yet came away with bronze. Rothenmund the young Swiss won the qualifying race and was right on the pace before ramming the bank and losing several seconds. Shipley, the consistent American, hit a gate on the first run and could not get going second time. As the race unfolded it seemed as though the rest of the field was preparing the stage for one man on a mission. But Tomas Schmidt, the pocket sized German, needed no such an invitation. Calm, assured and totally focused, Schmidt quietly went about his business with no fuss or frills. His boat positioning and timing were excellent giving the impression of an effortless ride. To cap it all his expression was totally relaxed until he finally unleashed at the finish of his second run and screamed in glory showing off his taut German biceps to the world. It was a release of emotion and frustration after a year off through injury. Schmidt on that day typified the essence of slalom-fast and clean, always in control, powerful yet precise. His winning margin was a substantial six seconds.

After the Games the analysis is painfully simple. Our athletes have progressed in many respects and are still developing the consistency needed to perform in the major races. The results at the Olympics were a reflection of the performances in other competitions this season. In contrast, the winners may not be fitter or faster but they make fewer mistakes, they have more clean runs, they come from teams with strength in depth and they have to compete at their very best simply to qualify. For Australia, the qualification for Sydney was simple. For Athens 2004 it will be much tougher and it will mean training and racing smarter and in some cases harder, developing bombproof consistency under pressure and maximising the right competitive opportunities along the way. The race is on.

## What's cooking at the Olympics

*Liz Broad gives a run down on the logistics of catering for thousands of athletes at Sydney 2000.*

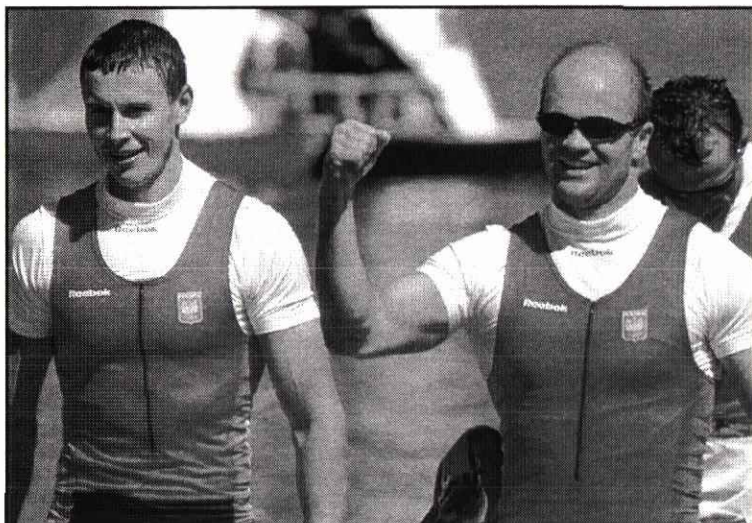
Imagine feeding over 2000 athletes and officials from every country of the world, all day every day for four weeks. Although by the time this is published, the Olympics and the Paralympic Games will be over, some people may have wondered what the athletes ate. With all the “hoo haa” about the Olympic sponsors (Coca-Cola and McDonald's), one could be forgiven for thinking that the athletes ate and drank junk food throughout the games. Rest assured, that was not the case...

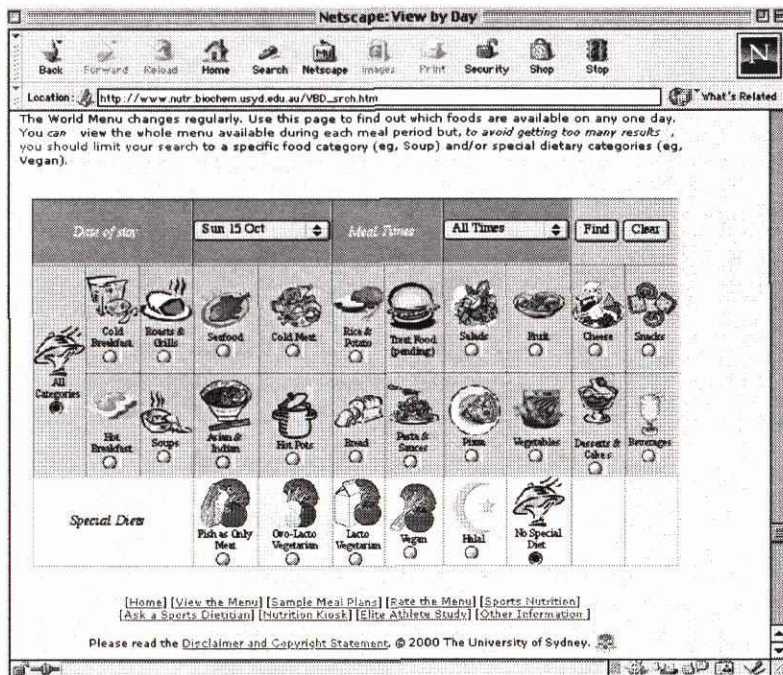
The challenge of providing home-style meals which suit a huge range of athletes' tastes and meets their sporting, cultural, religious and allergy / intolerance needs is not easy. The sheer logistics of placing serving areas in order to avoid lengthy delays without duplicating every dish and item 30 times is mind blowing. Spotless Catering got to take up this challenge for the 2000 Olympic Games. They provided the

meals in the Homebush Village dining hall and to all the venues. For once, the main village menu was known well in advance of the Games starting. The University of Sydney put together a website containing an outline of the menu every day of the games and a nutritional analysis of each dish. The website is [www.nutr.biochem.usyd.edu.au](http://www.nutr.biochem.usyd.edu.au), and is also full of useful nutrition tips and advice and you can even get an analysis of a daily menu of your choosing! As you'll see, the range of foods on offer was enormous, and yet every dish was analysed for nutritional content and had information at the point of serving about it!

The Australian sprint and slalom canoe/kayak and rowing teams did not stay at the main village until after they had completed racing – instead they were housed at the University of Western Sydney, who had their own in-house catering. The menu was carefully designed to cater specifically for athletes (using high-carbohydrate, low-fat guidelines) but yet provide enough variety that anyone could choose a dish at each meal. But, just because it was designed by dietitians doesn't mean it wasn't edible! Imagine this scenario – starting the day with a good serve of cereal and fresh pancakes. Lunch starting with soup, then a choice of making up your own gourmet sandwiches or a hot dish (even home-made pizzas!) and chocolate brownies for that sweet touch. Finishing off the day with a whopping serve of lasagna or maybe the roast turkey for a change, with apple crumble and ice cream for dessert. Then plenty of bars, fruit, yoghurts, bread and cereals for in-between meals.

Despite having food laid on, there are a lot of challenges to eating well. Remember what you're like at an “all you can eat” restaurant? Now put it in the context of having this on hand 24 hours/day for 2–3 weeks when the only other things you're doing are training and competing! For others, the thought of entering the dining hall and waiting in line with 1000 other athletes is so overwhelming that they

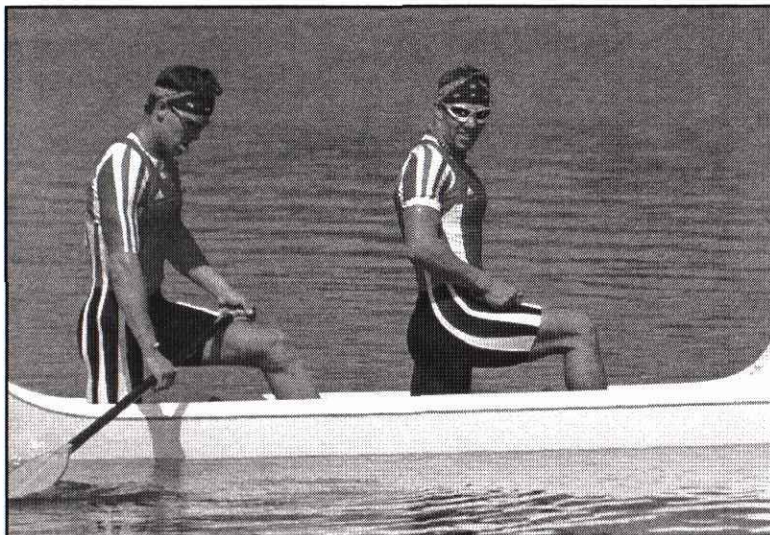




tend to avoid it, and therefore may not eat enough. Challenges are set as to who can eat the most... (like in Barcelona when the Magnum chocolate was first launched and was free!). Eating well requires discipline and a commitment to putting dietary needs first, but that doesn't mean athletes can't enjoy the whole sensation.

So, what happens with all that free McDonald's and Coke? Well, I hazard a guess that most of the Australian athletes didn't partake much until after their competition had finished. Those who succumbed to the temptations probably regretted it afterwards.

*The University of Sydney put together a website containing an outline of the menu every day of the games and a nutritional analysis of each dish.*



*Attila and Tamas Buday – Canada – C2. The Buday brothers are coached by their father (who was a champion Hungarian C paddler before migrating to Canada) The Canadian paddlers were featured in a IOC promotion of the Sydney Olympics that was shown throughout Australia.*

*After SOCOG announced that slalom would not be included in the 2000 Olympic Games there was intense international and national lobbying by politicians and canoeists to have Slalom reinstated in the Sydney Games. Penrith City Council donated three million dollars towards the construction of the Penrith Whitewater Stadium – see supporters list, page 44.*



*Opposite page top: MK4. 4 paddlers showing gold medals – Canoe Sprint 1000m – gold medalists – Hungary – Gabor Horvath, Zoltan Kammerer, Botond Storcz, Akos Vereckei (listed alphabetically).*

*Opposite page bottom: sprint paddlers walking on the deck – members of the MK4 Canoe Sprint 1000 m team for Poland – Bronze medalists – Dariusz Bialkowski, Grzegorz Kotowicz, Adam Seroczynski, and Marek Witkowski.*

**All photos: Sue Price.**

Stephen Schaefer

## Paddling with my sister

*An Olympic journey begun in 1993 by two sisters came to its conclusion in the semi-finals of the women's K4. Stephen Schaefer profiles Amanda Simper, a member of the K4 crew at the Sydney Olympics, and the journey she made to be an elite athlete at the "old" age of 27.*

When a 13-year-old West Australian schoolgirl, Rachel Simper, heard the Olympics would be held in Sydney she wanted to be involved, if only as a volunteer. Her older sister, Amanda, a surf club member, had some advice for her.

"I said 'Rachel, aim higher, go and train for the Olympics,' Simper, now 32, remembers saying. "I sort of suggested to Rachel she'd be genetically suited to paddling, I picked up surf ski paddling pretty easily."

Simper rang up about an advertised schools program, but Rachel's school wasn't involved. The organiser, Ramon Andersson, a former Olympic bronze medallist, offered her the opportunity to bring Rachel down, and she jumped at the chance.

"I went down with her," Simper recalls, "and while I was there he said to me 'Do you want to go out for a paddle with

her', so we both jumped in K1s and off we went. By the time she'd done few paddles, he was suggesting she go and train with Charles Luckman, who had a junior squad of girls.

"I rang up Charles about doing the program for Rachel, and he said 'I've heard that you're paddling and I've got a group of older girls and if you want to come down and do some training then I've got a group you could train with.'"

Using a borrowed kayak, the elder Simper trained over the Christmas holidays with Luckman, without whose program she believes there would be no girls paddling in West Australia. By the end of the holidays she decided to buy her own boat and keep going.

With no thought of Olympics, Simper was paddling for fun, and to encourage her sister to keep going. "It's hard when you're younger to really be motivated to train and stuff like that, and I thought if I got good results that would be an encouragement to Rachel to try and do better than me."

Simper went to the 1995 nationals, winning the first of her national titles in the K1 1000 m. Shortly after returning home, the head canoe coach at the West Australian Institute of Sport, Krzysztof Lepianka, asked her to join the program.

"He came to me and said 'I would like you in the program, I think you can go to the Olympics,' Simper says. "I was like, 'You've got to be kidding.' When you're 27 years old you don't think anyone's going to ask you to become an elite athlete. That happens to people who are at least 10 years younger."

Hearing this from an experienced international coach who had been to the Olympics, she decided to trust his opinion. "I was obviously never going to have the opportunity again, so I decided to take advantage of it and to really give everything to make it work."

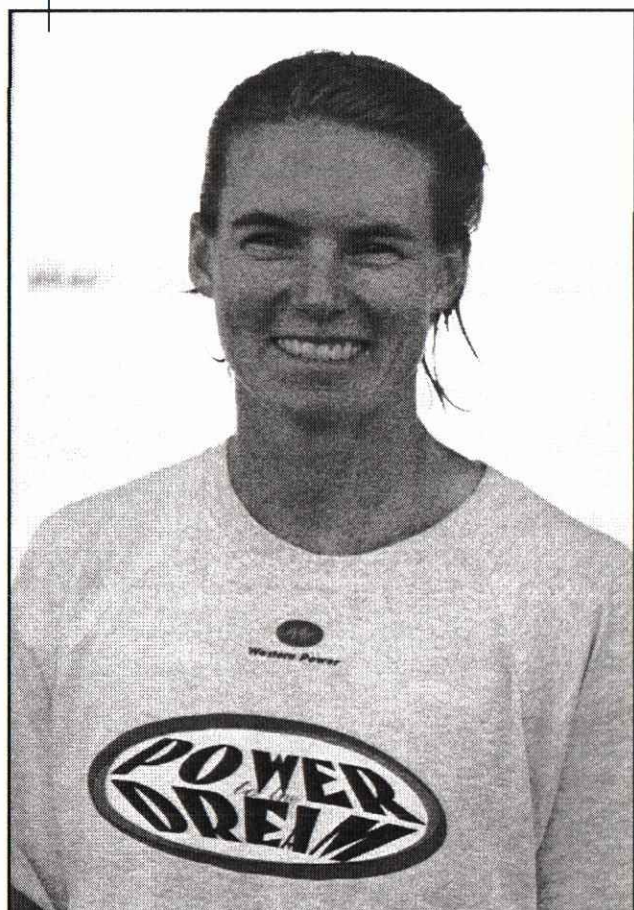
After that auspicious start, Simper went on to repeat her success in the K1 1000m at the 1996 nationals, adding the K2 1000 m title for good measure. She made the Australian sprint team in 1997, 1998 and 1999 seasons with podium finishes in the K4 500 m in several international regattas.

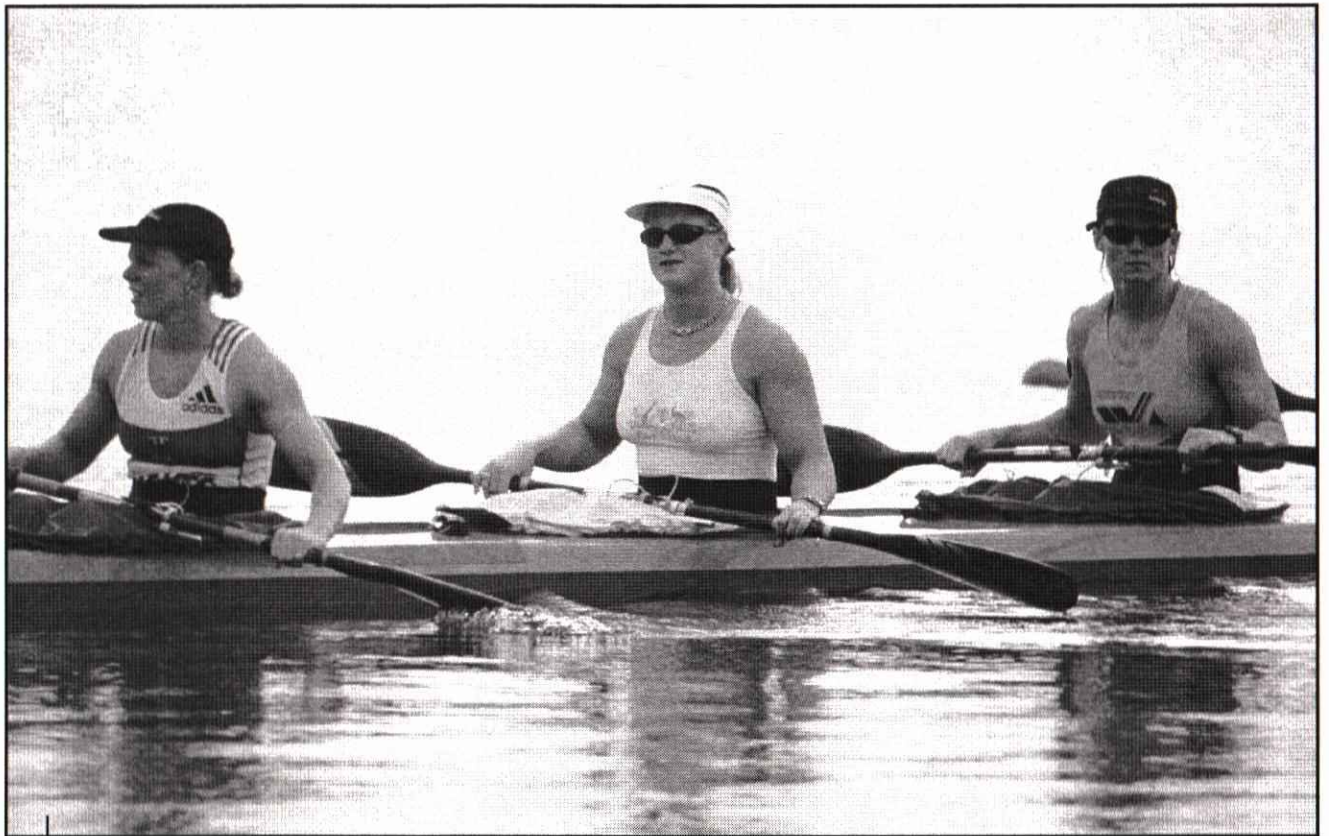
A conservator with the State Library in Perth, Simper was well established in her job before needing to start taking time off work to follow her sport. "They're really good about giving me time off, particularly at short notice and they really work around me and my program." She was

*Amanda Simper at a K4 training camp.*

*"I was never going to have the opportunity again."*

**Photo: Stephen Schaefer.**





*The team effort to send the best crew to the Olympics. Paula Harvey, Jacqui Mengler and Amanda Simper training on the Olympic course.*

**Photo: Stephen Schaefer.**

a member of the Australian K4 crew that finished 6th in last year's world championships, and then went on to paddle in the silver medal winning Australian crew at Sydney International Regatta in last September's Olympic test event. Training camps for the K4 squad for Sydney were next on the horizon.

As one of ten paddlers, Simper went to training camps in December, January and February 2000. By February, her slower times had resulted in her being displaced from the leading K4 crew being trailed at the camps.

There are no excuses or complaints. "If you were to ask me why I was dropped from that K4, I would say because my K1 results weren't up to scratch," she says. At the same time, she was confident her times would improve over the next eight weeks before selection.

In the Australian championships in March, Simper drew the fastest heat, and although her time improved, she didn't make the K1 500m final. In the 'B' Final, however, she won with a time that would have given her third place in the 'A' Final.

At the second nomination regatta in April she rises to the occasion, winning her heat to stay in contention. The final K4 trials in April are her last chance to stake a claim for selection in the Olympic K4 team.

Amanda Simper is on the verge of her ambition. "I want to go to the Olympics and I want to get a medal," she

says, but she is not only in this for herself. "I want to set a benchmark, not only for Rachel, but other juniors in WA. I train with them, I'm talking with them, I'm staying with them when we're at regattas. I hope I'm setting an example."

For Rachel Simper, whose Olympic goals started this journey for her big sister, she is already an inspiration. "She's probably my biggest role model. As she progresses and gets close to the Olympics I feel there's a really big achievement parallel in what she's doing. I can really learn from all she's been through, so I love having her involved."

The Australian team for the Europe tour is announced and Amanda Simper is in it. For five weeks Simper and the other team members have a job to do. They are there to do some solid training and compete in regattas from Szeged, Hungary to Duisburg, Germany.

"It was definitely the hardest training in my life," Simper says.

After returning to Australia and going through a stressful period while the team is finalised due to appeals, it is time for the finale of the journey started by her sister seven years ago.

"It was great to be involved in the Australian team flag raising ceremony," Simper says. "It would have been really good to spend time in the village at the beginning."

Unfortunately the need to stay close to the Regatta Centre means that the canoe and kayak team have their accommodation at a satellite village at the Kingswood campus of the University of Western Sydney. They join the rest of the team for the opening ceremony.

"It was fun," Simper says, "It was good to be a part of it." For her the emotion has been there all week with her parents, her grandfather, her sisters and her nephew Zac in town, as well as fiance David and his parents.

There have been other obligations to complete. "We weren't allowed on course to train before we got our uniform."

For the canoe and kayak sprint team, the early experiences of the rowers and canoe slalom were a welcome education. "The rowers prepared us for the noise on the start line," Simper explains. "Having never raced with that in Australia before we went into the race thinking 'Let's block out everything', and to be controlled and relaxed."

The success in blocking out the noise, however, had an unplanned for result. In Simper's words, "We forgot to have fun".

Needing to be only solid and steady in the semi-final to advance to the final, the crew's hopes are dashed by a bare margin.

"We tried too hard," Simper says. "We didn't get excited about racing. We were too controlled and it felt disjointed."

Although disappointed, she says that the appeals didn't affect their racing. "We didn't race to the standard we'd set, but we didn't stop trying."

Before leaving Australia to join David in running a Milford Sound backpacker hostel in New Zealand, Simper talked about her future. "I can't see myself competing in the nationals next year. When I'm paddling at the moment, it's nice, I can stop and wait for junior girls and give them encouragement."

Amanda Simper has given the junior girls paddling in Western Australia something to aim for.

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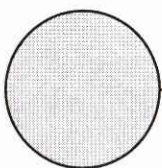


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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS – 2000–2001

EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
<b>DECEMBER 2000</b>			
<b>SPRINT</b>	9–10	<b>Sprint Grand Prix 1</b>	<b>Hinze Dam, Gold Coast, Qld</b>
<b>CANOE POLO</b>	15–17	<b>2000 Australian Interclub Canoe Polo Championships</b>	<b>Challenge Stadium, Perth</b>
<b>WILDWATER MARATHON</b>	28–30	<b>Australian Wildwater Championships</b>	<b>Mitta Mitta River, Victoria</b>
	26–31	<b>Red Cross Herald-Sun Murray Marathon</b>	<b>Yarrowonga–Swan Hill</b>
<b>JANUARY 2001</b>			
<b>SCHOOLS</b>			
<b>WW and SLR</b>	1–3	<b>Australian Schools Wildwater and Slalom Championships</b>	<b>Goulburn River, Eildon, Victoria</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	5–7	<b>Australian Slalom Championships</b>	<b>Goulburn River, Eildon, Victoria</b>
<b>SPRINT/SLALOM</b>	10–14	<b>Sydney Youth Olympic Festival</b>	<b>Sydney</b>
<b>SPRINT</b>	20–21	<b>Sprint Grand Prix 2</b>	<b>Nagambie Lakes, Victoria</b>
<b>FEBRUARY 2001</b>			
<b>SPRINT</b>	9–11	<b>Sprint Grand Prix 3</b>	<b>Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith, NSW</b>
<b>FREESTYLE</b>	17	<b>Freestyle Nationals Lead Up Event</b>	<b>Mersey, Tasmania</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	17–18	<b>Eurolympics – Roches du Diable</b>	<b>Quimperle (France)</b>
<b>FREESTYLE</b>	21	<b>Freestyle Squirt Event</b>	<b>Broken Bridge, Tasmania</b>
<b>FREESTYLE</b>	22–23	<b>Freestyle Nationals Practice</b>	<b>Brady's, Tasmania</b>
<b>FREESTYLE</b>	22–23	<b>Freestyle National Championships</b>	<b>Brady's, Tasmania</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	24–25	<b>Eurolympics</b>	<b>Lannion (France)</b>
<b>MARATHON</b>	24–25	<b>WA Marathon Titles</b>	<b>WA</b>
<b>MARCH 2001</b>			
<b>SPRINT</b>	3–4	<b>SunSmart Sprint SA Titles</b>	<b>West Lakes, SA</b>
<b>SPRINT</b>	10–11	<b>WA Sprint Titles</b>	<b>WA</b>
<b>SPRINT</b>	20–24	<b>Australian Sprint Championships</b>	<b>Nagambie, Victoria</b>
<b>APRIL 2001</b>			
<b>SPRINT</b>	13–15	<b>Sprint World Cup 1</b>	<b>Gainesville (USA)</b>
<b>CANOE POLO</b>	14–16	<b>Australian Interstate Canoe Polo Championships</b>	<b>Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre, Victoria</b>
<b>MARATHON</b>	14–16	<b>Australian Marathon Championships</b>	<b>Geelong, Victoria</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	21	<b>International Slalom</b>	<b>Osilnice – River Kolpa (Slovenia)</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	21–22	<b>Liptov Slalom</b>	<b>Liptovsky Mikulas (Slovakia)</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	28–29	<b>International Slalom</b>	<b>Monschau (Germany)</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	28–29	<b>International Slalom</b>	<b>Solkan (Slovenia)</b>
<b>MAY 2001</b>			
<b>SLALOM</b>	5–6	<b>International Slalom</b>	<b>Tacen (Slovenia)</b>
<b>SLALOM</b>	11–12	<b>Tatra Slalom</b>	<b>Liptovsky Mikulas (Slovakia)</b>

**NATIONAL EVENTS BOLD**  
STATE EVENTS NORMAL TEXT

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS ITALICS

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS – 2000–2001

EVENT	DATE	INFORMATION	LOCATION
<b>MAY 2001</b>			
SPRINT	11–13	Sprint World Cup 2	Sevilla (Spain)
SLALOM	19–20	International Slalom	Cunovo-Bratislava (Slovakia)
SLALOM	26–27	World Cup Slalom 1	Goumois (Switzerland)
WILDWATER	31–June 3	Wildwater Pre-Worlds	Valsesia (Italy)
WILDWATER	31–June 3	European Wildwater Championships	Valsesia (Italy)
<b>JUNE 2001</b>			
SLALOM	2–3	World Cup Slalom 2	Merano (Italy)
SLALOM	9–10	World Cup Slalom 3	Tacen (Slovakia)
SPRINT	15–17	Sprint World Cup 3	Mantes-la-Jolie (France)
SPRINT	29–July 1	Sprint World Cup 4	Copenhagen (Denmark)
SLALOM	30	International Slalom	Tacen (Slovenia)
<b>JULY 2001</b>			
SPRINT	6–8	European Junior Slalom Championships	Bratislava (Slovakia)
SPRINT	13–15	Sprint World Cup 5	Zagreb (Croatia)
SPRINT	13–15	European Sprint Racing Championships	Milan (Italy)
MARATHON	14–15	Marathon World Cup 2	Zamora (Spain)
MARATHON	14–15	European Marathon Championships Seniors/Juniors	Gyor (Hungary)
SLALOM	28–29	World Cup Slalom 4	Prague (Czech Republic)
<b>AUGUST 2001</b>			
CANOE POLO	1–5	European Canoe Polo Championships	Bydgoszcz (Poland)
SLALOM	4–5	World Cup Slalom 5	Augsburg (Germany)
SLALOM	12	WA Slalom Titles	WA
SLALOM	17–19	Pre-World Championship Event	Bourg-St-Maurice (France)
SLALOM	18–19	International Slalom	Bratislava-Cunovo (Slovakia)
SPRINT	22–26	Flatwater Racing World Championships for Seniors	Poznan (Poland)
<b>SEPTEMBER 2001</b>			
MARATHON	1–2	Marathon Racing World Championships and World Cup for Juniors	Stockton-on-Tees (Great Britain)
SLALOM	1–2	International Slalom de Metz	Metz-Moselle (France)
SPRINT	7–9	Flatwater Racing World Championships for Juniors	Curitiba (Brazil)
SLALOM	8–9	World Cup Slalom Final	Waussau (USA)
SLALOM	20–23	Slalom Racing World Championships for Seniors	Ocoee River (USA)
CANOE POLO	28–Oct 1	Australian Interclub Canoe Polo Championships	Sydney Regatta Centre, Sydney
<b>NOVEMBER 2001</b>			
SLALOM	17–18	European Slalom Interclub Championships	Epinal (France)
	November	VII Central American Games	Guatemala City (Guatemala)

Kevin Noble

# The River of no return

**Eight days of  
wilderness whitewater**

*Kevin Noble and friends paddled and rafted the Salmon River in the United States in July. Kevin describes this paddle as one of the ten best wilderness paddles in the world.*



*Tappan Falls was a real challenge to everyone.  
Steve runs the falls in his 14 foot cata-raft.*

**Photo: Laura Noble.**

In July this year a small group of Australians joined some American friends to paddle the Middle Fork of the Salmon River Idaho, USA. The American paddlers had been paddling with us in NSW for several years whilst working here. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity to paddle one of the ten best wilderness paddles in the world.

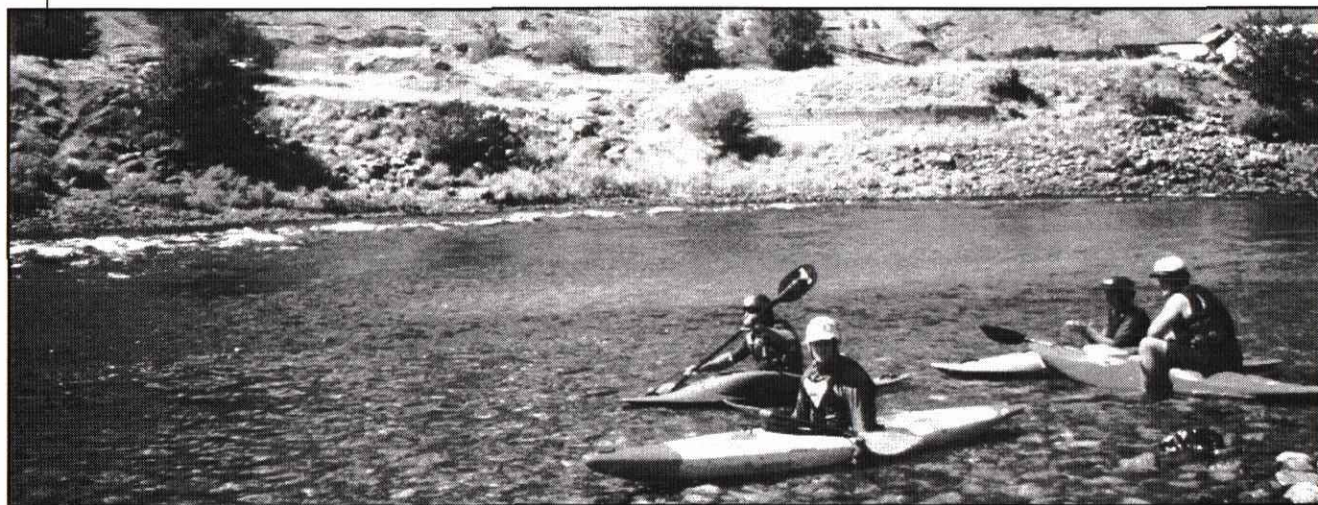
The drive into the massive Rocky Mountains was awe-inspiring. These mountains are desolate and all but impenetrable.

In 1805 William Clark, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, attempted to explore the Salmon as a possible water route to the Columbia River, but he was forced back by rapids that were impassable to boats and canyon walls too steep for men and horses.

The Middle Fork is protected as one of the U.S. National Wild and Scenic Rivers and paddling permits are required. It is one of a very few American rivers unfettered by dams or hydro project of any kind. Starting 20 miles northwest of Stanley with the merging of the Bear Valley and Marsh Creeks.

*Having a break. There were three cata-rafts, two conventional rafts and 10 kayaks of various shapes and sizes.*

**Photo: Kevin Noble.**





*A beer and a thermal bath to top off a great day's paddling.*

**Photo: Noble collection.**

The Middle Fork runs alongside the two-mile high Sawtooth Range through the un-surpassed beauty of the 2.3 million acre "Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness". 100 miles of cascading crystal clear water plunging 2600 feet down until it joins the Main Salmon. The Middle Fork flows through lands so rugged that all attempts at settlement have failed and even today there are no roads and few signs of permanent presence.

There are plenty of fish to be caught on this river but none can be kept especially the Steel Head, and Chinook salmon and Cutthroat trout, as this is strictly a "catch and release" river with only barb-less hooks allowed.

All refuse including fire ashes and body waste have to be taken out with you and this practice ensures that the river campsites are certainly the cleanest I have ever experienced.

### **Boundary Creek**

The put-in at Boundary Creek is 6000 feet above sea level not far from the melting snows, which have carved this canyon waterway.

Our group consisted of ten American paddlers and rafters from Idaho and surrounding states together with the five Aussies and a lone French Canadian. There were three cata-rafts, two conventional rafts and 10 kayaks of various sizes and shapes. Most stayed in camp intent on final preparation, gear to check, rafts to inflate, frames to secure. Rigging five rafts and moving them to the start point takes quite a while.

When this was complete some of the paddlers took the short walk to Dagger Falls, which gives an insight into what lies ahead although due to a fallen tree and an upstream forest fire it is presently unsafe to paddle.

We camped overnight at Boundary Creek and awoke the next day to inclement weather, which no doubt contributed to an unfortunate accident in the early hours of the morning. One of our shuttle rigs left the road and rolled on a return trip to Stanley necessitating the passenger (an Aussie) running 6 miles back to camp to alert us. After some very welcome assistance from the Boundary Creek rangers and the local Sheriff arrangements were made to notify the insurance company and arrange a tow. So early afternoon we were given our mandatory river lecture by the rangers and got away in cool showery conditions after a little hail.

Sulphur Slide, the first real rapid is class III. It is a steep rock garden, which requires some careful manoeuvring at the top. It was unfortunately the downfall of one of our paddlers, who after a spill from her boat failed to negotiate the many boulders in this "bony" rapid. She suffered a cracked tailbone thus relegating her to passenger status in which ever raft had room for her.

### **Velvet Falls**

Velvet Falls, five miles below the put-in, is the first class IV rapid, but provided it is run to the left, avoiding a sheer drop with its mandatory big hole, is a fairly clean run and at this low level is a lot of fun.

## Trail Flats Camp

The first night was spent at Trail Flats Camp and after a cool to cold day the night was crisp and the stars sparkled in the coils of steam as we languished in the warm mineral springs contemplating a metre or two away the eddies and waves to which we would return tomorrow. Mineral springs are a feature of this paddle and we stopped at several in the first few days.

The cooking was shared and meals were as varied as barbecued elk steaks, marinated trout and various pastas and stir-fries.

We ran rapids with names of Artillery and Cannon Creek rapids past creeks such as Mortar, Springfield, Remington and Colt, so-named during the Indian wars.

The water was cold and as clear as any I have ever paddled and in the calmer stretches you could watch the coloured, cobbled riverbed slide quickly past. It was as if we were riding on glass.

Mountain peaks surrounded us, the Salmon River Mountains to the west, the Big Crags to the east, some craggy with bald rock faces, others blanketed with conifers and many coloured grasses. The canyons carved from Idaho granite that once lay under volcanoes eroded away over 100 million years ago.

These surroundings if rated on a scale of I to VI would either rate as VII or VIII.

At Indian Creek a short level strip is used by small aircraft to bring in rafting gear and clients, if the water level is low.

Powerhouse rapids where the early miners had a camp and water wheel to power their sluicing equipment is a long class III that required scouting but was no real problem.

We visited caves painted with ancient pictographs etched in red ochre and dated over 8000 years old, left by the original residents of these canyons a tribe of the

Shoshoni Indian Nation known as the Tukudeka or Sheep Eaters.

As we descended, numerous creeks added more and more water to the river, which becomes wider and deeper. The class IV Tappan Falls and Pistol Creek rapids proved to be quite a challenge.

At other times we are drifting lost completely in the magnificence and peace breathing in the solitude and oneness with nature that moments like this can bring.

In the middle section the canyon opens into large valleys surrounded by granite peaks that reach for the skies. The river can be wide and shallow with multi-coloured pebbled bottom or deep and blue where the big fish hide.

Big horn sheep, deer, elk, troublesome squirrels and chipmunks and the ever-playful otter joined us as we descended this magnificent watercourse.

## Impassable Canyon

The last two days we entered the Impassable Canyon, 27 miles of narrow granite-walled gorge. The azure blue summer sky were now tinted, and sometimes almost obscured by the unmistakable haze of some of the huge wildfires ranging nearby.

The canyon contains the biggest rapids of the trip, including Redside, Cliffside, Rubber, Hancock, House Rock and Devils Tooth where the rafts were bounced from boulder to boulder and all, but one kayaker, were rolled by the tricky hydraulics.

We had great fun surfing some incredible waves with plenty of eskimo rolls as the waves tipped most of us out.

All too soon our group reached the junction with the Main Salmon and only a few miles later the take-out at Cache Flats.

*Kevin Noble taking time out to have some fun.*

**Photo: Laura Noble.**





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Noel McMahon

# 404 km — Murray Marathon

27–31 December 2000

*Noel McMahon gives a run down on the Murray Marathon and interviews one of the great characters of the Murray – Ted Jackson. 79-year-old Ted Jackson trains every morning for 2 hours and he has his name in the Guinness Book of Records for a solo journey to the mouth of the Murray.*



*Winners of the K1 relay at Swan Hill.*

**Photo: Michael Loftus-Hills.**

Maybe it's the personal challenge, the opportunity to compete in the world's longest canoe race, the lure of gathering a few more blisters, the adventure or the chance to raise some money for a damn good cause.

Whatever the motivation, the Red Cross Murray River Marathon has developed into an Aussie summer time tradition that just keeps dragging paddlers back year after year.

For 31 years, competitors of all standards have burned off their Christmas excesses in a torture test over 404 kilometres of Australia's beautiful Murray River.

Once again on the 27th December, an army of volunteers, support crews and an expected 1200 paddlers from Australia and overseas will converge on Yarrawonga for the long paddle to Swan Hill.



*A hectic change during the Schools TK2 relay.*

**Photo:**  
**Michael Loftus-Hills.**

*Waiting for the change during the K1 relay.*

**Photo: Michael Loftus-Hills.**

From humble beginnings in 1969 when ten paddlers in seven canoes battled the river to raise \$250 for the Australian Red Cross, Victoria, the race has developed into a high profile fundraising event. Attracting the attention of the national media and capturing the hearts of sports fans across our sunburnt country.

For the competitors, the Murray River Marathon is a great adventure, but it is also an outstanding opportunity for athletes, their families, friends, clubs and corporate sponsors to support the Red Cross in their provision of humanitarian services to people in need.

The Australian Red Cross cares for people in crisis. Few people realise the extent of the work undertaken by their dedicated band of volunteers who help quietly and without fanfare in difficult times and situations.

The Murray River Marathon plays a valuable role in the raising the awareness of Red Cross programs and sponsorship monies are vital to their work, both in Australia and overseas.

In preparation for what is the biggest race of its kind in the world, competitors undergo months of training and countless hours of paddling for the challenge ahead.

Then for five days, the mobile tent city and support vehicles follow the competitors along the Murray River from Yarrowonga, passing the historic towns of Tocumwal, Echuca, Cohuna and Swan Hill.

The river comes alive as town folk, local residents and tourists turn out in force to welcome the paddling "Armada" into their town.

The Murray River Marathon is really several races within a race, attracting not only the best of the best, but a strong following of talented athletes paddling craft from 90 different canoe classes.

The K1 International Cup sees some of the world's best paddlers racing in one-person racing kayaks (K1) in a relay fashion along the entire length of the marathon course. This is the elite division for serious competitors and the pace is furious from the start to the finish.

The Great Murray Relay is a teams event with crews rotating at each checkpoint throughout the distance. This is the ideal event for work or family teams, clubs and school groups and the perfect introduction for those new to the sport.



Then there is the Original Murray River Marathon with individual competitors and teams of two, three, four or five who together, paddle the entire course.

Age is no barrier to entry with the schools division of the Great Murray Relay open to secondary students. The junior category of Murray Marathon is open to paddlers as young as 13, who paddle the same route over a reduced number of kilometres.

Each day on the water presents a new challenge whether you are an Olympian or a rookie. The battle against aching muscles, scorching sun and sweltering heat must be won in a daily test of skill, endurance, determination and teamwork.

Over the years, the Red Cross Murray Marathon has earned a reputation of being an extraordinary test of mind and body for competitors and support crews alike. But conquering the river is only part of its appeal.

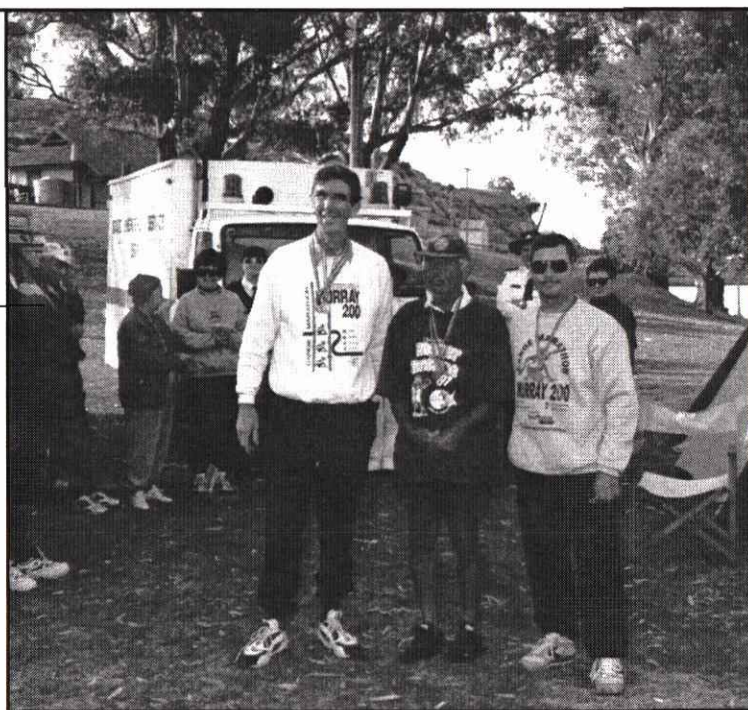
It is a tough event and not for the unfit or faint-hearted, but it is more than just a canoe race. It is a world class event that has a special place in the hearts of everyone who has competed and many who have watched from the banks.

The camaraderie and good humour at the campsites and the rekindling of old friendships make being involved in the Murray River Marathon an extremely enjoyable and unforgettable experience ... and definitely one to be repeated.

# Ted Jackson

*Bill Robinson, Ted Jackson and Fred Lambert at the finish of the Murray 200 in South Australia.*

**Photo: Robinson collection.**



Society tells us that when you are getting along in years, you are supposed to be sitting back enjoying your retirement. Well at the age of 79, Queensland's Ted Jackson is thoroughly enjoying himself but there is no way he is going to retire.

In fact according to Ted's rules of life, he must not become a pensioner and he is determined he will never trade his beloved paddling in for a set of bowling whites.

"Why should I? Just because everyone else chases retirement why should I? No chance of me being a lawn bowler, that is really going down the sink. That is the last gasp," he laughs.

Ted owes his longevity and exceptional fitness to the fact that he has never smoked and although he admits he might have had one drink when he was about 14, he has never been in a McDonald's.

When he is not working in his job as a painter, Ted is out training in the beautiful Sunshine Coast, where he lives with his wife.

"I train every morning for two hours, 5-7am. Home for breaky and guts into everything. In the arvo, if I am home, I usually do 12 km on the beach of running and walking. That is terrific, it keeps your body more even than paddling does."

Ted has had an affinity with the water since his childhood days when he launched his home made tin canoes in Running Creek, a tributary of the Logan River.

"Water was my business and you are either that way or you aren't. I always had to be down at the creek or river doing something or floating, so eventually I got involved in canoes."

"As a kid I used to make old tin canoes and put them in the creek. I used to sink them all and the old blokes used to say to put a tin drum in it. I never did and they used to tip over and go down," he recalled.

During World War Two, Ted did a stint with Royal Navy as an anti aircraft gunner but he didn't miss any opportunities to have a paddle when they presented themselves.

"Sometimes we had to train in collapsible canvas canoes and used to do some landing exercises and things. That sort of kept me in touch. Then when the war ended I worked like hell for a while but after six or so years I got back into paddling."

"I remember it was around then that I bought my first canoe made of fibreglass. That was really something," Ted said.

His great love has been "chasing down rivers" as Ted calls it, paddling along taking in the scenery and talking to the birds.

The distance has never been a problem. In 1971, Ted and his son Norm paddled a double Canadian from Texas in Queensland to the mouth of the Murray, a trip of 3,750 miles that took 67 days.

So good is Ted at battling against the water, that he even has his name in the Guinness Book of Records for a solo journey from Killarney at the head waters of the Condamine River, to the mouth of the Murray. That trip took him 11 weeks, as he travelled 5,230 km through the heart of Australia's river system.

"In the Guinness paddle I was unsupported. I would call into places where I could buy some tucker, or I ran a line and caught a few fish but generally I'd just try and get ten-day stuff. You didn't want a big load, so you have to watch what you eat and ration yourself," he said casually.

In 1992, Ted got itchy feet again, so he gathered up his son Norm and headed to the USA for a bit of sightseeing. Ted was 71 years old when he and Norm launched their double at Lake Itasca in Minnesota and pointed it south towards the Gulf of Mexico.

The Mississippi is one of the busiest waterways on earth and it flows through some of the least hospitable parts of the USA, but it was no challenge for the Jacksons. Forty seven days and 3,780 km later they had achieved their goal.

"It is heavy barge traffic although you don't get many ships until you get down to New Orleans. They are pushing 42 barges along and that is a river full."

"You can't stop off on the bank but we sorted it out pretty early. There are a lot of islands on the river and we noticed that nobody was ever on the islands. So that's where we camped. The baddies don't seem to like the water, they all seem to hang around the towns," Ted said.

The Red Cross Murray Marathon holds a special place in Ted's heart and he is revered by his fellow paddlers.

His preparation for this year's race has been hampered by a "crook double hernia" that has knocked him around but Ted is looking forward to the 400km trip with his partner John Hales.

"I think this is the 20th year and I paddled about 12 of them solo, the rest in doubles. It is a good paddle and our longest paddle. I have got to know so many people and it is a good social business."

At 60 kg, Ted is one of the smallest fellas competing in the Murray Marathon but according to his good mate Bill Robinson, he is a giant of the sport.

"Ted embodies all that is good in the ANZAC spirit. If you ask me who is the person that I hold in the highest regard, I would have to say Ted Jackson. He is one of the truly great achievers," Robinson said.

Those that have had the pleasure of speaking to Ted Jackson, would simply have to agree.

**"Water was my business and you are either that way or you aren't. I always had to be down at the creek or river doing something or floating, so eventually I got involved in canoes."**

# Red Cross Murray Marathon

**27-31 December 2000**  
 (Registration Day - 26 December, Yarrawonga)

- Five days and 404 kilometres.
- The world's longest canoe race, on Australia's longest river.
- It's tough, it's fun, and it goes a long way to support the Australian Red Cross, Victoria.
- For more details, phone (03) 9685 9839.

**+** Australian Red Cross  
 171 City Road, Southbank, Vic 3006

## Canoe Education

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*Australian Canoeing continues to set strong benchmarks in 2000. The development unit has been fortunate in gaining further financial support from the ASC to head up new initiatives in the redevelopment of the Australian Canoeing Award Scheme and Active Australia. This coupled with the employment of Paul Sheppard (Project Officer) and the honorary personnel such as coaching and officiating coordinators have enabled significant improvements in coach and officiating education, participation and the Australian Board of Canoe Education Award Scheme.*

Australian Canoeing has become an Active Australia provider and is working with several clubs and businesses to develop their own Active Australia Provider programme. A strong feature of these programmes is fee-for-service professional coaching with multi-level streams, progression standards and an organised structure within the club or organisation to develop all facets of canoeing. Within these structures is the possibility to develop young, developmental and potential elite paddlers to all disciplines of canoeing. Active Australia provides a framework of quality assurance for schools and community bodies involved with the provider, professional development for the instructors and coaches involved, and a self-monitored programme of improved service, streamlined business approaches and a marketing tool. Australian Canoeing has actively been involved in assisting clubs and other bodies who are interested in developing fee for service programmes. It is an essential part of the sports progression that coaches become professional in their outlook and at least charge a basic fee that represents that professionalism.

### Level 2 Flatwater Course

Level 2 Flatwater Coaching Course was recently held in Brisbane with 23 participants, making it both a large course and an exciting one thanks to the quality of all concerned. There have been three Level 2 courses and each one has improved upon the other. Many great presentations from the like of David Aitkin in strength and conditioning and biomechanics, a thought provoking and entertaining presentation on physiology from Dr. Bob Treffene (from Australian Swimming), marathon racing by Robin Belcher, sprint racing with Jamie Walker, an excellent and practical presentation on sport psychology by Clinton Laurence, an interesting presentation from Barry Kelly on technique coaching. Lynda Lehmann had the task

of filling in the gaps and tying together different presentations like training programmes, technique coaching and the racing stroke and coach effectiveness. Jonathan Clark presented on racing rules and Toinette Stoddard drugs in sport. The participants themselves also had a large role to play in making this an excellent Level 2 course, with skills ranging from recently retired elite athletes through to those heavily involved in schools programmes and talent identification programmes. Well done to everyone – especially QLD Canoeing for their assistance.

### Level 2 Wildwater Coaching Course

The very first Level 2 Wildwater Coaching Course was held in Tasmania over 3 days at the end of October. Eight Tasmanians and one Victorian attended, all of whom ended the course with their knowledge and skills greatly enhanced thanks to the quality of presenters.

A highlight of the course included demonstrations of the very latest in software packages for computer assisted video analysis, by Dan Billing of the TIS. Questions about the blade position through a stroke and the exit point of the blade were able to be answered immediately with dot points and frame by frame motion. Comparisons of paddle angles during the stroke were able to be made using overlaying images of different paddlers. Our imaginations were lit by the exciting possibilities of applying these and many other analysis techniques to video footage of the paddlers we coach.

The Strength and Conditioning presentation by Ted Polglaze of the TIS “redefined what I thought the gym was for”, in the words of one participant.

Tammie Ebert's presentation on Nutrition demystified the subject of performance enhancing supplements by revealing that by eating large quantities of meat and drinking human milk we could obtain the same benefits as those expensive supplements.

The final day was spent on the Leven River, in the sun, experimenting with paddling drills and coaching methods for whitewater techniques.

Although the 3-day course was intensive, the discussion generated and the sharing of ideas amongst some of the most experienced paddlers and coaches in Australia was memorable and created a unique experience for those involved. ACI Wildwater Committee therefore hope that other Level 2 courses will be run in other states in the near future.

## **"Coachconnect" & The Coaches Association**

The first edition of a regular newsletter for canoeing coaches was launched in September. It is a multi discipline newsletter aimed at opening up discussion between coaches. The second edition will be available soon, featuring articles presented by coaches who were delighted to find a medium for their communications, concerns, information sharing and development. The "CoachConnect" newsletter is available to members of the Australian Canoeing Coaches Association. The Association has been upgraded this year, with a close look at the benefits that coaches receive by becoming a member. The membership form has been overhauled and coaches are encouraged to join.

## **National Seminar**

The National Sprint Seminar was again held prior to the start of the National Sprint Championships. This year's topic was season planning, with Barry Kelly, John Sumegi, Brett Worth and Lynda Lehmann presenting different aspects of how they plan for their various squads. Around 20 coaches and interested people attended. There are more coaches who would like to attend these seminars, however the timing, on the eve of the beginning of the Championships, prevents many who have organisational responsibilities with their squads. It has been suggested that a more comprehensive seminar at the end of the Championships might be better attended. It is difficult to please everyone with timing, content and duration. All coaches are to be encouraged to plan for continued professional development, either by the National Programme, State Programmes or even by their clubs.

## **International Slalom Coaching Conference**

In cooperation with the International Canoe Federation and Penrith City Council, Australian Canoeing hosted the International Slalom Coaching Seminar in Penrith. The conference took place on the 5th and 6th of October following the World Cup Final. The conference featured presentations by Internationally renowned Sports Scientists, Coaches and Sports Administrators. Papers from the seminar are available to federations and coaches that were unable attend. Overall the conference was highly received by all participants with comments such as "the best conference ever", "superbly organised, a lot achieved and fun too!" For further information please see the conference evaluation attached.

Many thanks Jane Farrance, Peter Flowers, Richard Fox, Liz Broad and Lauren Sykes for their assistance to coordinate such a successful conference.

## **National Providers / AC Quality Training Centres**

For twenty-seven years the Australian Canoeing Award scheme has been recognised as the appropriate award for people instructing canoeing and kayaking in Australia. Today it is recognised by State Education Departments of all denominations nationally as the 'best industry practice' in the Outdoor Recreation industry.

The development unit is formulating their development and coaching plan for 2001. From 1 January 2001 only official AC National Training Providers will be eligible to administer the AC Award Scheme.

AC National Training Providers will need to become an Active Australia provider. This will assist in ensuring a nationally recognised quality control within the AC Award Scheme and AC will assist all prospective AC Training Providers' to become an Active Australia provider.

The new AC Award Scheme will align itself with the national Vocational Educational and Training competencies and will enable AC to award not only AC Awards but with it's recent Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status, the competencies of attainment also.

To deliver the AC Award Scheme trainers will need to hold the award they are delivering and the AC Assessor Award. The AC Assessor courses will be run in all States the first being delivered in Melbourne on 24-26 November 2000.

One of the many benefits of organisations becoming an AC National Training Provider who are an RTO, are that it is possible for them to award both forms of qualification. However should the organisation not have RTO status then they can still administer the AC Award Scheme nationally. Another benefit of becoming a National Provider, the Public liability and professional indemnity insurance policy from IEA. Through the AC National Providership Scheme IEA are offering providers the opportunity to be quoted on their current insurance policy. Organisations that have already taken this option have found IEA to be highly competitive and in most cases to have reduced their premium.

By forming alliances with organisations it will enable Australian Canoeing to administer the national award scheme and remain impartial, while maintaining the quality of delivery by official training providers.

If your organisation is interested in becoming an Official National Training Provider please contact Paul Sheppard at Australian Canoeing for a providership proposal outlining all relevant details.

## Assessor Training Courses

Australia Canoeing will be conducting nine National Assessor Training Workshops throughout Australia over the next year. The first of these courses will be held in Melbourne on the 24th-26th November 2000 all further dates will be promoted once finalised. Assessor Training assist AC by improving (Examiners) Assessors skills in the conducting of assessments on participants completing instructor, skills, rescue, coaching and officiating awards. This award is the minimum requirement for all future AC assessors.

The purpose of canoeing assessor training is to enable AC assessors to:

- Identify and explain the context and purpose of assessment
- Plan evidence gathering opportunities
- Organise assessment activities
- Gather and record assessment information
- Make a valid assessment decisions
- Provide constructive feedback to the participant
- Report on and evaluate the assessment.

### Benefits of assessor training

- Teaches assessment processes and techniques
- Teaches inter-personal skills required for constructive assessment
- Develops quality control of assessment and competencies
- Develops an understanding of the development process of assessment tools
- Develops skills required to assess within the vocational education and training sector
- Improves the quality and consistency of the current and future assessment in the Australian Canoeing Award Scheme
- Evaluate the current approach to assessment
- Develop a pool of qualified assessors recognised by AC, the Sport and Recreation Industry as well as by other industry bodies.

AC plans to qualify any person who currently holds a registered AC qualification e.g. Basic Skills Instructor, Whitewater Instructor, Level 2 Coaches, Level 2 Officials etc.

On successful completion of the course, participants will receive a statement of Attainment covering the following competencies:

- BSZ 401A – Plan Assessment
- BSZ 402A – Conduct Assessment
- BSZ 403A – Review Assessment
- ACA 001A – Sport Specific Module

### Assessor Training Courses Dates

Cairns (QLD) Dec 8, 9 & 10 2000

Perth (WA) Feb 2, 3. & 4 2001

Hobart (TAS) January 25, 26, & 27 2001

Sydney (NSW) 16–18 Feb 2001 TBC

Darwin (NT) March 2001 TBC

Brisbane (QLD) April 20–22 2001 TBC

## NATIONAL DISCIPLINE COACHING COORDINATORS

### Canoe Polo

Duncan Cochrane

Coaching Coordinator  
5/230–246 Semaphore Road  
Brikenhead SA 5015

Ph: (08) 8242 5871 (w)

Mobile: 0414 182 035

Fax: (08) 8242 5821 (h)

Email: duncancochrane@kayakspplus.com.au

### Wildwater racing

Andrew McQuity

Coaching Coordinator  
1113 Kindred Rd  
Kindred TAS 7310

Ph/Fax: (03) 6429 3350

### Marathon racing

Position Vacant

### Australian Canoeing

Peter Horne

Coaching & Development Manager  
PO Box 666  
Glebe NSW 2037  
Ph: (02) 9552 4500  
Fax: (02) 9552 4457

### Sprint racing

Lynda Lehmann

Coaching Coordinator  
1039b Oxford Falls Road West  
Oxford Falls, 2100. NSW  
Ph: (02) 9453 5860 (b)  
Mobile: 0412 645 694  
Fax: (02) 9453 5860 (b)

Email: perform@hotlinks.net.au

### Outrigger racing

Therese Powell

Coaching Development Officer  
PO Box 6308,  
Shopping World North Sydney, NSW, 2060  
Mobile: (0418) 225 959

### Slalom racing

Position Vacant

# Calendar: coaching, officiating and seminars

## Outriggers Level 1

**Contact:** Garth Civil  
**Location:** Perth  
**Date:** 27-28 January 2001  
**Phone:** (08) 9317 3227

## Sprint Level 1

**Contact:** Lynda Lehmann  
**Location:** Newcastle  
**Date:** Jan 2001  
**Mobile:** 0412 645 694

## Slalom & Wildwater

**Contact:** Respective coaching coordinator  
**Date:** TBA

## Canoe polo

**Contact:** Belinda Ness  
**Location:** Adelaide SA  
**Date:** Feb 2001  
**Phone:** (08) 8269 8333

## Update Accreditation UP#0001

**Contact:** Qld Canoeing  
**Location:** Sports House, Cnr Castlemaine & Caxton Sts, Milton  
**Date:** 6 December 7.30pm

**Contact:** Duncan Cochrane  
**Date:** April 2001  
**Phone:** (08) 8242 5871 (w)  
**Mobile:** 0414 182 035

## General Principles Level 2 GP#0002

**Contact:** Qld Canoeing  
**Date:** 3 Oct to 28 Nov 2000  
Every Tuesday Night  
**Cost:** \$180

## Level 1 Accreditation C#0003

**Location:** Flatwater  
**Contact:** Qld Canoeing  
**Date:** Jan 2001  
**Cost:** \$165

## Many Australians choose sunscreen as a popular form of defence against sun damage.

New research findings however, suggest that some Victorians believe sunscreen alone will provide them with total protection and as a result, are spending longer hours exposed to the sun.

This is particularly the case for paddlers who use only sunscreen as protection when canoeing or competing in events.

Despite being convenient and quick to use, sunscreen does not offer 100% protection from damaging UV rays. A SPF 30+ for example, will only block out 96% of UV, allowing a small but significant amount to still reach the skin.

Add to this that most people do not apply enough sunscreen or forget to reapply every two hours and the protection factor is reduced even further.

Last year alone, over 1.6 million Victorians got sunburnt. One out of two Victorians will go on to develop skin cancer as a result of sunburn and sun exposure they have accumulated throughout their lives.

Craig Sinclair, Chair of the National Skin Cancer Committee, says "These findings strongly reinforce the health messages we've been promoting for over ten years.

"Sunscreen is not a form of adequate protection on its own and should not be the first choice for skin cancer prevention.

"Relying on sunscreen as your primary means of UV protection - whether you are sunbaking, gardening or sitting in the outer at the cricket - may increase your risk of developing skin cancer," he said.

One of the easiest ways paddlers and race spectators can reduce their risk of UV damage is to avoid being in direct sunlight between 11am and 3pm.

Head out for a paddle later in the day, hold twilight competitions or watch the action from under a tree or umbrella.

If you can't avoid being outside, wear a hat with a flap at the back to protect your ears, neck and head. Wear a shirt with a collar or sleeved rash vest, sunglasses and use sunscreen to protect your hands, arms and legs.

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Peter Dingle

# Sea kayaking in Greenland

Part One



*Paddlers check their bearings as sea fog makes navigation difficult.*

**Photo: Peter Dingle.**

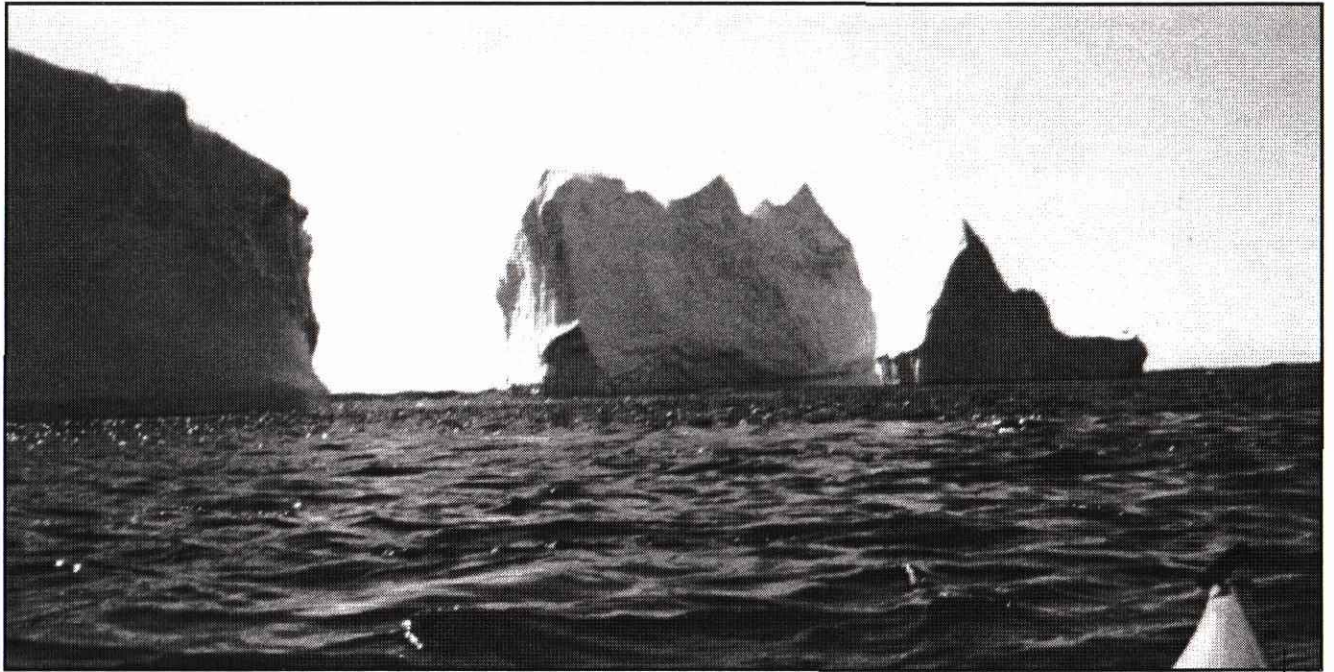
*Peter Dingle describes his journey around the coast of Greenland in July 1999. Peter spent 12 days in a 6-week summer paddling amongst giant icebergs and freezing water.*

The Greenland trip was for 12 days. I was to paddle with two staff from Ultima Thule Expeditions (UTE), an Icelandic Adventure travel Company. Baldvin a co-owner of the Company who was organising the trip and Ottar, an experienced paddling and walking guide. My friend Oskar was unfortunately unable to come on the trip as there were plans afoot by the Icelandic Government to dam a wild river for 'cheap hydro power' for a planned aluminium smelter and he was trying to make it clear to Icelanders as to what the loss of this wilderness area would entail.

South Greenland only has about a 6-week summer; the significance of which only became apparent when I was told that, outside of these dates, no direct flights returned to Iceland. The implication was that we could not afford to miss our plane out. Similarly for shipping; beyond summer the weather became too difficult and the seas began to freeze over.

As our twin engine aircraft slid below the cloud base on our gentle descent to the southern town of Narsarsuaq I was surprised by the massive size of the Greenland ice-cap. Everything was white, many rugged mountains and valleys and eventually and perhaps more importantly, the huge fjords with 'millions' of icebergs in them. This place was huge and everything I saw seemed untouched. There was no sign of human habitation anywhere; just snow covered steep mountains and iceberg-filled fjords – could we really paddle through that? As I pushed my face harder into the aircraft window, I imagined myself in my kayak trying to pick out a pathway through the ice. For some sections it seemed an impossible task; besides weren't these things meant to roll over unexpectedly, sending up huge waves? Wouldn't it be unwise to try and squeeze in between icebergs with only (what seemed like) centimetres in between?

Stepping off the airplane to walk across the tarmac to the terminal, I gazed in wonderment around me. The country was strikingly different to anything I'd seen before. All I saw was cloud enshrouded mountains, icebergs and airport. The airport is an old US Airforce Base from WW2 and the Korean War, and was constructed in typical American fashion "let's take those mountains from there and fill up the sea over there, flatten the lot



*We were so struck by the awe of these icebergs that we were drawn closer than good judgement would have dictated.*

**Photo: Peter Dingle.**

out and bingo, there's your airport". It is a unique experience flying and landing amongst mountains and icebergs. **And a silent prayer sent up to the pilots who have to dodge in and out of here.**

But there was still something strange about the place that I couldn't work out until it finally dawned on me: there was simply no vegetation! Apart from some small bushes around the town, everything was bare. Greenland has no trees (apart from one small valley) and you certainly notice the absence of the familiar and welcoming colour. Everything but the icebergs seemed grey. Grey sky, grey glacier-worn mountains and grey sea.

It would need a special sort of person to call this place home. Even though the temperature seemed like a pleasant 10°C with a mild 20 knot wind, the wind must rip through this place at other times of the year – and there were no trees to offer shelter. The town, from what I could see, consisted of about a dozen widely distributed buildings, one of which was a huge luxury motel, the former Airforce Administration buildings I guessed. The buildings were surrounded by huge fuel-oil tanks for heating and shipping. The sea was their only food source; everything else had to be flown or shipped in.

I was surprised to discover that Greenland, with a population of only 55,000, is largely isolated. Many of the towns and villages are accessible only by boat, plane or helicopter and occasionally skidoo. There are no roads connecting the sparsely spread villages as the country is very mountainous and there are too many fjords, glaciers and icecaps to either cross or circumnavigate.

I was met by Ottar, one of my paddling companions, at the airport. He was just saying farewell to a group of English clients whom he had just guided on a 6-day

summer trek. We walked up to the Youth Hostel, transporting huge amounts of gear. (I brought everyone's paddling gear and a lot of food, though as we were to discover, their shops are now very well stocked since Baldwin's tour last year – tropical fruits and all!!)

Balvin was still out reconnoitring the trip and we were to collect him the next day. We had booked our boat weeks earlier (it only holds limited passengers) and it would take us two days by sea to reach the start of our trip. Ottar and I loaded all our gear onto the boat, including two British-made plastic seakayaks, which had been left behind by a previous French expedition of some years ago – it is so expensive to get gear in that it was prohibitively expensive to take the boats back home again. I had brought Baldwin's prized folding seakayak with me on the plane – an expedition Feathercraft.

At the end of our first day of fjord travel we met Baldwin at Qaqortoq. Here he introduced us to a young Inuit in his early 20's who he was hoping to employ on future seakayaking trips as a leader – he was the current Greenland Seakayaking Champion in Eskimo rolls and he kindly offered us a demonstration. We were bewildered by his display of some 30 different rolls. He went through a shortened version of what you need to do in the National Championship rolling events, starting from easy to the most difficult rolls, both with and without paddle and with and without use of hands and arms, in his own beautifully constructed handmade traditional boat (for which he also

won first prize). He offered for us to have a go, but we kindly declined. I had earlier measured the temperature of the water as 5°C, but I wondered whether that iceberg just 50 metres to my right was there when I measured it!!!

He showed us the boatshed where they store and build their seakayaks. They use timber and canvas now rather than traditional whale bone and seal skin. He explained the traditional way of building a boat to the shape of the individual, based upon that individual's own body measurements, to determine width, front deck height, back deck height, etc. He also showed us the traditional seal-skin full body spray skirt and cagoule and explained how everyone prefers to use specially made neoprene ones now – seal skin has to be continually maintained to prevent it from drying and cracking and has hence lost favour. It was fascinating.

After two days of sea travel with the boat dodging icebergs and our fellow passengers dodging and stepping over our boats cramming the deck, we arrived at Nanortalik (population 1500). In Nanortalik – 'the place of the bear', we started to get ready for the trip. (We were told that polar bears hadn't been sighted here – ie. shot – for some years now)

Greenland is still a part of Denmark\*, but they have their own local government. We observed both 'Danish descendant' Greenlanders and 'Inuit descendant' Greenlanders.

Buying extra food, organising boat and helicopter pick ups at trips end, observing the open air seal-meat roadside butcher shops in operation, meeting the locals and chatting all took time. Packing the boats amidst such stunning scenery was unforgettable; rugged mountain peaks everywhere and of course, the fjords with the ever present icebergs everywhere. I was relieved to find that these fjords were not crammed with icebergs like what I saw from the aircraft.

Mountaineers often launch trips from here to climb on the huge granite mountains and cliffs (some with vertical

faces of 1600 metres!). We'd be happy paddling at the base of them I'd reckon.

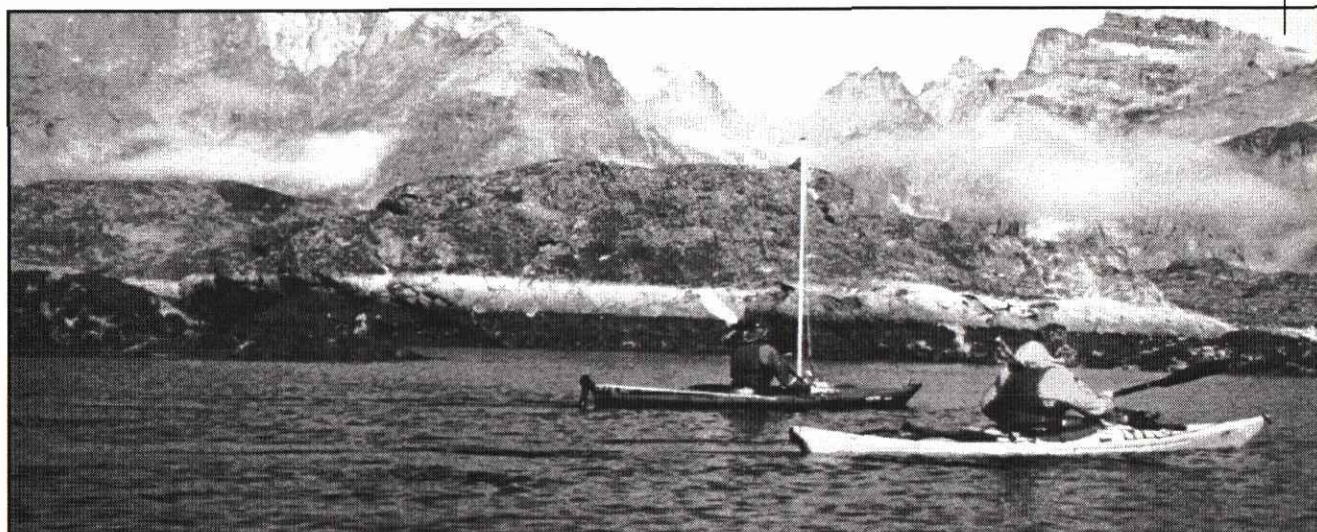
After letting some of the local kids sit in and paddle our boats, we departed on an outgoing tide and increasing rear quartering wind. What a feeling it was to be finally off not knowing what type of seas or country we were heading into. For the last two days we had been pouring over the map and discussing what Baldy had learnt and toying with various trip options. Baldy had led a seaking trip last year in the Sondre Sermilik Fjord but this year wanted to access the more remote and rugged fjords further east. It was good to be finally off.

We didn't make it far the first day and we propped on an island initially just to wait out the increasing wind and the subsequent roughening sea, but ended up staying there the night. We could see what seemed like a very powerful wind in operation, judging by the cloud speed, in the fjord some kilometres to our west; was it coming our way? Fully aware that now, judgement was perhaps our greatest safety aid, we cautiously waited, observed and reassessed. It was cloudless in our fjord so we found it difficult to compare our wind speed to that of the west-fjord clouds – surely we were not experiencing THAT speed – were we? As an ignorant visitor, I was keen to learn of the interaction and influence on weather by the world's largest icecap, deep fjords and high mountains, and the sea.

We decided to wait. Looking out to the open sea we could see considerable white caps. Upon analysis, our decision was easy: our intended route headed out of the fjord and along this white-capped exposed coastline to the next fjord, with only 3 hours of daylight remaining and with no place to land for at least this amount of paddling time helped us clarify our situation. As we unpacked,

*We were always on the lookout for potential landings or campsites in case of the fjordal or Fohn winds.*

**Photo: Peter Dingle.**



\* Although Greenland is part of the Kingdom of Denmark, the country has moved towards relative independence.

Local children play on a kayak after unloading gear.

Photo: Peter Dingle.

I made a mental note to put on another layer of clothing under my borrowed dry top – I was freezing. As we gazed on this amazing scenery, we wondered about landing locations. All we could see of the last few kilometres of our fjord were massive cliff lines; if the wind blew up, life could get interesting finding somewhere to hide or land. As we watched, a heavy sea fog rolled in along the coastal mountains and around the fjord entrance we were considerably more happy with our decision to prop.

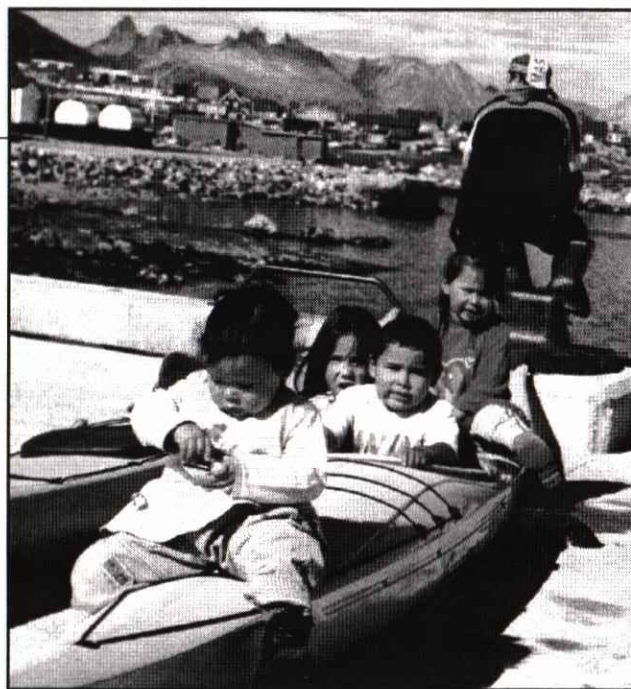
We camped near a human-made pile of rocks (only later were we to find out what this was) and watched the nearby icebergs and tried to decide how much of their slow motion was due to the outgoing tide or to the outgoing wind. The next morning it was clear, the largest of the icebergs had moved back inland; the water currents were their controller; water pushing on 7/8ths of their mass had more effect than the effect of wind on 1/8.

The next day we set off early in clear skies. Out of the fjord and along the coast we encountered iceberg-city. There were at least 20 of them and they were HUGE. The ones we had been seeing in the fjords were minuscule compared to these monsters.

I was told the biggest icebergs get to be about 2 million tonnes apiece, though I suspect the ones we were meeting were far less. The glaciers here calve at only about 20,000 tonnes a day – the bigger ones up in north Greenland calve at 20 million tonnes a day!! The ice cap that feeds these glaciers is up to 3.5 kilometres thick and about 2/5 the size of Australia! The bigger icebergs are around 200m tall (so about 1.5 kilometres of it is underwater – allowing for different shapes under sea level). The tallest ones we saw were about 100 metres high. Apparently the glacier that sank the Titanic came from western Greenland.

We were all cautious about paddling too close to icebergs, knowing that they can roll over or break apart at any moment, sending huge waves of freezing water and tonnes of ice onto unwary paddlers. One thing that I observed was that the ice just didn't 'slough off' – it 'exploded off'. The event was heralded by a very loud 'CRACK' and on very quickly (and nervously I might add) looking, you noticed that the ice 'exploded' out far further than the height of the iceberg – up to 5 times the height of the visible portion of the iceberg.

The explosion comes from the enormous release of tension of compressed air from when the 'iceberg' was made. Over successive years of snowfall, each layer of snow becomes compressed until, at about 50 m depth, it



becomes ice (each 10 cm of snow forms 1 cm of ice). The air trapped within this now is under considerable pressure, and seeks release. Hence the explosions. I couldn't help wonder though as I gazed upon an iceberg, how many hundreds or even thousands of years old was it? – and was I looking at the oldest part or the youngest part, for they topple and roll as they erode differentially.

Even though the instinct for self-preservation is strong, it was difficult at times to find the self-discipline necessary to keep well clear from such magnificent and beautiful objects. Wave action at their base carved intricate shapes, and you could see angled wave patterns on those that had toppled to a new position, clearly showing their former wave-weathering patterns.

In hindsight, it was fortunate that our concerns about paddling on exposed open waters challenged us to explore route alternatives as it removed us from the temptation of iceberg touring on the open sea. The high level of self-discipline necessary to avoid paddling too close to these giant ice sculptures deteriorated to dangerous levels at times. For our own safety, we really did need to get away.

The bonus of choosing a meandering route through beautiful narrow channels among low level islands in more sheltered waters was that we encountered many Minke whales. At lunch we were further entertained, sitting high on the rocks in the summer sun above a large pool in the 10m wide channel we were mesmerised by the antics of a whale swimming back and forth in the clear water chasing schools of fish. We were deeply humbled by the amazing power, speed, agility and grace of such a large creature in an environment to which we were only transitory visitors; awe and respect hung in the air.

Part 2 – next issue.

# State roundup – Canoeing Victoria



*Canoeing Victoria has recently appointed two new staff:*

*Eric Ward – Executive Officer*

*Karl Russell – VCA Coach and Development Officer.*

## **Eric Ward**

### **– VCA Executive Officer**

Eric has a diverse background in operations management, sports administration and promotion. Originally from WA Eric started his canoeing as a junior and during his early years twice won the Avon Descent in a K1. Moving to Melbourne in 1977 Eric founded one of the original adventure tour companies, Wildtrek. Merging with the larger Peregrine Adventures Eric held the position of National Operations Manager for 10 years. As a competent river guide he initiated many of the first commercial trips on the Franklin, Mitta Mitta, Herbert and Gwydir Rivers. In 1983 Eric founded the first multisport event in Australia and 18 years later still coordinates what is known to most of us as the Active For life Winter Classic.

Eric holds post graduate qualifications in workplace training and is currently completing an Advanced Diploma in Business Management. As a corporate executive Eric has worked within the Department of Sport and Recreation as Group Manager Industry Development and with Leadership Management Australia he has provided training and consulting services to business. Maintaining his training accreditation he is currently lecturing in business management within the Box Hill TAFE.

Throughout his life Eric has been passionate about outdoor activity. Since his early success in WA he has

paddled competitively in slalom K1, C2, WWK1, sprint, marathon, dragon boat and surf ski and more recently was a top 10 finisher in a JLL team. Eric is also an avid skier, MTB rider and junior hockey coach.

As VCA Executive Officer, Eric will be responsible for the management and coordination of office functions and staff, for advising the VCA executive and representing the VCA to government, business and the community.

## **Karl Russell**

### **– VCA Coach and Development Officer**

Karl has been involved in canoeing for 13 years having represented Australia in 1989 as a junior and again in 1992 in the under 21 team. Later he gained a scholarship to the AIS Canoe Unit on the Gold Coast, Queensland, where he has been for the past 5 years.

Karl represented Australia again in 1998–1999 and was part of the shadow Olympic squad for Sydney 2000.

Working extensively in banking and finance, he is currently in the third year of university, studying his Bachelor of Accounting and Economics.

Karl's role as Coach and Development Officer is to continue developing the VCA's delivery of the Australian Canoe Award Scheme courses. With his passion for canoeing and our joint vision of canoe education in its broadest sense, Karl is expanding programs into more schools, clubs and disciplines to strengthen the promotion of safe canoeing.

### **Australian Wildwater Championships and Rapid Sprint Titles**

Organised by Canoeing Victoria  
Dec 28-30 – Mitta River, Dartmouth  
Dec 31 – Goulburn River, Eildon

**Information: 0417984726**  
**General enquiries: 94594251**

### **Australian Slalom Canoeing Championships**

Organised by Whitewater Australia  
on behalf of Canoeing Victoria  
Jan 1-7 Goulburn River, Eildon

**Information and general enquiries: 98169411**

## **State canoe info?**

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# State contacts

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## NSW Canoe Association (including ACT)

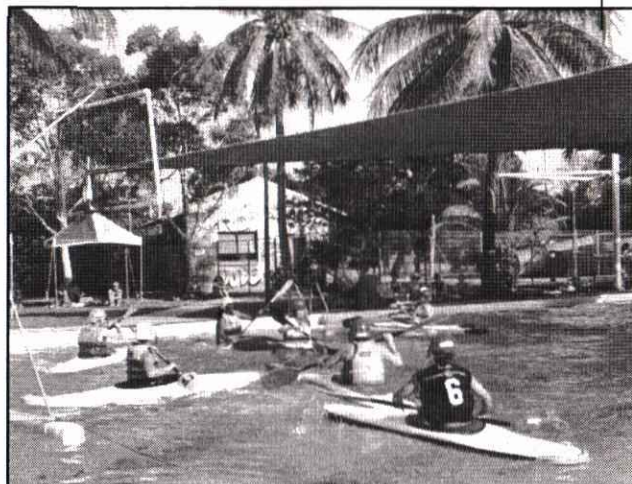
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*Women's Canoe Polo – Darwin.  
Next issue state round up will feature  
canoeing in the Northern Territory.*

**Photo courtesy of Northern Territory Canoeing.**



Chantal Meek

## Paddler profile

*Olympic Special talks to Chantal Meek about the World Marathon Championships in Nova Scotia, Canada.*

### Can you tell us about the lead up to the World Championships in South Africa?

I spent most of 1997 living and training with friends in Denmark. In 1998 I won the Australian Marathon Championships and made my first National Team to compete in the World Championships in South Africa. I was selected to race in the LK2 with my sister Brie and finished 10th.

In 1999 I was selected to race in K1 at the World Champs in Gyor, Hungary. I gained a great deal of experience and confidence in Hungary. It was the first time I was able to keep up with the lead pack and I learnt quickly how aggressive and strong you had to be to keep a good position in the pack. I ended up in 5th place about 2 minutes behind the winner.

### Has there been much financial support for you and marathon paddling?

My family and friends have always been a great support. There is very minimal funding in marathon kayaking, one of the hardest tasks this year was to come up with the money to travel with the National Team. Trying to keep focused and not worry about about the financial side is

hard. I was fortunate enough to come into contact with HIH Insurance who supported me to travel with the National Team to the World Champs in Nova Scotia, Canada – they were very supportive. Only 12 weeks before the race I was in hospital getting my tonsils taken out. The time out of the boat however ended up being a blessing, and once I recovered I was able to train harder than ever.

### Apparently you had a few problems getting to Canada – what happened?

After delays with our local connections our bags missed the flight to Canada and we arrived in Halifax with no luggage or paddles. Most of the luggage turned up after 2 days and the rest after 5 days – all except mine which took 10 days to be found. By this stage I had been forced to replace most things and set up my boat with borrowed equipment.

My missing bags were however a minor problem considering that all the teams K2s and a few K1s had been badly damaged in the container on the way over.

### What was it like in Canada?

We were amazed at the friendliness and generosity of the people in Halifax. One of the local kayak clubs lent us

Chantal Meek.

Photo courtesy of Victorian Marathon committee.



boats, while the Canadian National Sprint coach repaired all our damaged ones in between races at the Canadian Sprint titles – all free of charge! An article was published in the local paper with a photo of the damaged boats which resulted in one man coming to our motel and donating \$500 to the team! This was among dozens of other people offering their support.

Our accommodation for the first two weeks was perfect, right on the water about 25 minutes from the racing course.

### What were the conditions like?

We were very lucky to have four days of wind free weather for the racing. In the lead up weeks we experienced high winds which would have made racing very difficult.

The course for the seniors had five portages, two of these being over 500 metres. For me, and others with a running background the portages were of great benefit. The section following the portage for about 1 kilometre was in a very narrow canal, this had the effect of, fortunately or unfortunately (depending on where you were in the pack) keeping the groups very large and close together.

The three remaining beach portages were short (60 metre) and fast. One being only 5 kilometre after the start, and the last 5 kilometre before the finish.

The racing conditions tended to suit most of our team, as although we didn't win any races, our overall team results were the best Australia has had in a number of years.

In the World Championships I come 3rd – only 3/1000ths of a second behind 2nd, and 1.3 seconds behind 1st. Again, I have learnt an enormous amount from the race and look forward to applying what I learnt to next years World Championships.

## Snapshots



*The last day of sprint at the Sydney Olympics was full of drama. After hours of delay caused by strong winds some of the spectators couldn't resist a swim!*

**Photo: Karryn Hill.**



*Louise Ray is taken to her wedding ceremony with the help of five members of the Fairfield Canoe Club.*

**Photo: Unknown.**

## Sue Price Sports Photographer

### Specialises in Canoe Sports

Olympic photographs of Australian and overseas competitors

*Photographs can be seen at:*

**[www.fotogallery.net.au](http://www.fotogallery.net.au)**

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**Australian Canoeing thanks all the above supporters of the Penrith Whitewater Stadium. The above names will be used on the "Wall of Honour" at the stadium. Should there be any errors or omissions please contact Jon Bisset at Australian Canoeing on (02) 9552 4500 or [auscanoe@canoe.org.au](mailto:auscanoe@canoe.org.au)**

# The **Australian** Canoeing **Canoe** Polo **Committee** is planning:

- a four (4) – six (6) week tour of Europe for Senior Men's and Women's teams, leading up to the 5th World Canoe Polo Championships to be held in Essen, Germany in September 2002.
- a four (4) – six (6) week tour of Europe for Under 21 teams leading up to the 5th European Canoe Polo Championships to be held in Warsaw, Poland in September 2001.

The committee invites suitably qualified or experienced people to apply for the following positions:

- Manager U21 Teams**
- Manager Senior Teams**
- Coach U21 Teams**
- Coach of the Women's Team**
- Coach of the Men's Team**

Applicants should have qualifications and/or considerable experience relevant to the position/s and also have the ability to work in a team situation. The Team Manager will not be an athlete selected in the teams.

The successful applicants must be available to attend training camps as well as tour with the teams.

**For application forms and job and person specifications please contact:**

**Australian Canoeing Office**

**Ph: (02) 9552 4500 Fax: (02) 9552 4457 E-mail: [auscanoe@canoe.org.au](mailto:auscanoe@canoe.org.au)**

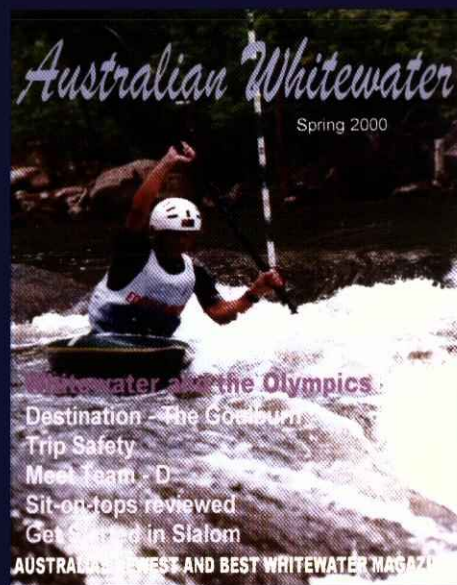
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