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AUSTRALIA'S PADDLESPORTS MAGAZINE

ISSUE 3 2007

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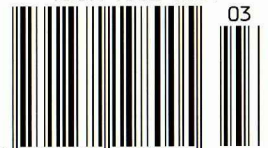


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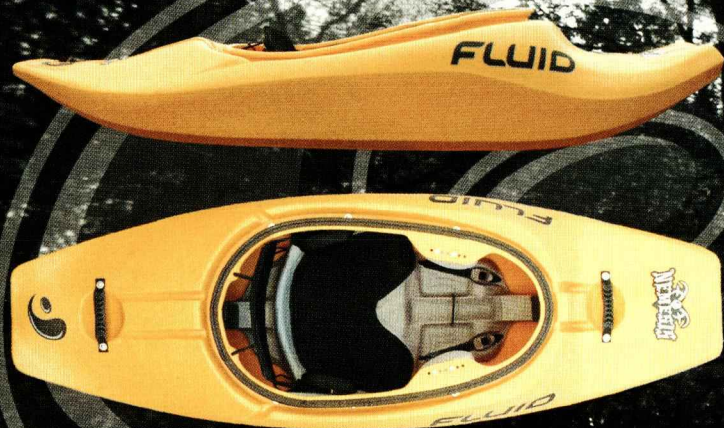


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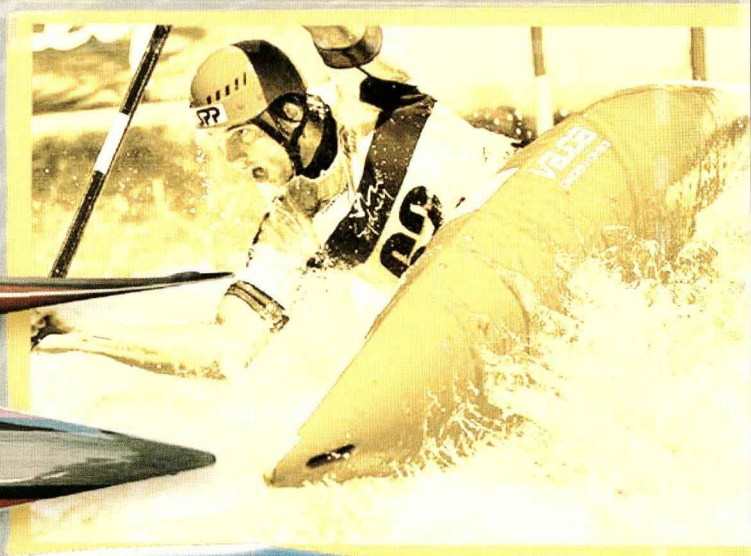
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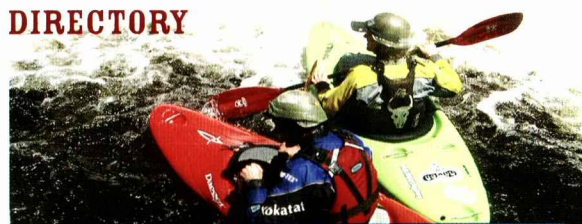
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DIRECTORY



Editor - Stacey Marsh;
magazine@australianwhitewater.com
PO Box 36, Cockatoo 3781 VIC

Advertising Manager - Roy Farrance
Advertising - Stacey Marsh
Production Manager - Dita Pahl
Graphic Design - Stacey Marsh

Contributors - Ben Maynard,
Stewart Bennett, Matthew Mann,
Dean Gardiner, James Thorpe,
Rebecca Jennings, Colin Furmston,
Ben McArthur

Australian Whitewater enquiries; editorial
comments to above address.

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WEST AUSTRALIAN WHITEWATER

AVON DESCENT

STEWART BENNETT

It can sometimes be a long winter in Hobart and maintaining an aerobic training regime, contending with the cold windy climate and short wintry days can present challenges to the motivation of any kayaker. With the prospect of winter approaching, I needed some increased stimulus to motivate myself throughout the harsher cooler months and keep me on the water day in, day out.

The 2007 Multiplex Avon Descent is a 134km white water epic, and is hailed as the "world's greatest white water event" and in the race's 35 year history, over 20,000 past competitors could agree. This race definitely is an epic.

This year's race was held on the 4th and 5th of August and aside from getting me a nice two week break from university and providing one of the most rewarding but demanding physical and mental challenges in my kayaking career, it also served as that winter time training goal and motivation I was searching for.

I flew from Hobart to Perth two weeks prior to the event to meet and paddle with the local paddlers and competitors and to practice on the vast kilometres of the Avon River on which the race is held. Upon arrival I was made to feel extremely welcome by Australian Avon Descent and endurance expedition legend Terry Bolland, his wife Jenny, and the wonderful community of the Ascot Kayak Club. But my good fortune didn't finish here, after little rain in many months and the Avon River trickling away at levels below paddle-able, I must have brought the rain. It began to rain the day before I had arrived and by the first day of the 2007 race, Perth and the Avon River catchments had received 15 days of consecutive downpour and competitors, organisers and spectators alike were bracing themselves for the highest race river flows in over a decade.

I spent the next week and weekend paddling the various sections of the 134 km race course with Terry and also with some fantastic help from the 2006 K2 champions and 2007 race favourites, Grant Pepper and Steve Myers. The infamous "Ti Trees" and the "Valley" sections are particularly challenging sections of the race and training on these sections prior to the race is necessary. I was extremely lucky to have such experienced and successful local paddlers share their lines with me during my preparation. I must admit, I had underestimated just how challenging and exciting the white water sections of the Avon would be, especially considering the high water levels this year. I had overlooked the white water component to a large

degree in preparation and was pleasantly surprised by the approximately 100km of class 2 – 4 rapids throughout the 134km race course.

The week prior to the event was resting time. Time to recover from training and learning the river, time to repair equipment in preparation for the race, time to relax and to try to get my head around paddling 134km in two days. This distance was much further than any other race I had ever competed in and I had never raced in an event that spanned two days. There were multiple extra considerations such as eating, hydration and even keeping you kayak and paddle in working order for the duration of the race. It was very exciting but admittedly a little daunting.

After the incessant rain driving down for over two weeks boosting the river to levels higher than any other race in the past decade, the Saturday morning of the race was gloriously sunny, not a cloud to be seen and 22 degrees, however at 8am when the racing commenced at Northam, it was a little chilly still.

On Day 1 the power boats start first, commencing the 68km stage from the town of Northam to the Cobblers pool campsite, with the paddle craft starting immediately after. Competitors are organised into grids of 16 boats at a time and grids are started 30 seconds apart. I was on the "Super Grid of 16" the first paddle craft grid containing the fastest paddlers in the field. Needless to say, even with 134 km ahead the paddlers didn't hold back and we started in a flurry.

Stage (Day) 1 is the shorter of the two stages and included in the 68km to the overnight stop are the features Northam Weir, Glen Avon Rapid, Extracts Weir and 11km of super technical Ti Trees to finish the day off. The front of the field quickly settled with a break away group of 4 paddlers taking charge. This included three teams and the eventual individual k1 winner, South African Sven Bruss. Western Australian Avon favourite Matt Coutts and I were the chase and the pair of us battled all day to restrict the time gap Sven was creating. Along the river bank and crowding bridges for the entirety of the stage were thousands of vocal spectators all urging their support for the 800 competitors charging their way down the mighty Avon. I could not recall ever competing in such a warm, friendly and well supported atmosphere and used the encouragement of the many supporters to push on.

**THE WORLD'S GREATEST WHITE WATER EVENT
AND NOW ONE OF THE RICHEST-**



I was 3rd in the men's K1 after Day 1 - a minute behind Matt Coutts and trailing Sven by 8. It was going to be tough on day two to hold my position, or make some inroads into the deficit on the leaders. However, Day 2 started with 50km of constant rapids and this was my best section of the river so anything was possible and despite already racing for 68km, I couldn't wait to start again on Day 2.

At 7am, the first grids powered of the start line for the 2nd day of racing. The heavy mist was slowly rising of the river as the lead paddlers disappeared back into the maze of Ti Trees and then into the "Valley" where they would spend the following 3-5 hours negotiating the many rapids. As it turned out, Matt Coutts and I paddling neck and neck once more promptly caught Sven Bruss (who had been dropped by the leading teams paddlers) and the three of us exchanged the lead as we pushed through the valley. I was feeling good as the white water was my strength however my fellow competitors, despite paddling unforgiving K1 kayaks stuck with me pushing me all the way.

The famous "Bells Rapids" (a spectacular 3 tiered drop) is a transitional point in the race as it marks the end of the white water and beginning of the 35km flat section to the finish line at Bayswater. I needed to stop to empty the wa-

ter from my kayak and also take some food and fluid from my support crew. Although I achieved all this in a brief 90 second detour to the river bank, Matt and Sven continued and I was on my own to battle out the final 30km. This provided the biggest mental and physical challenge for me of the whole race as I was unfamiliar with the final sections of the river and uncertain how my body was going to react to the final 2 ½ hours of racing (we had been pushing hard for three hours already that morning). Furthermore I could see no other paddlers although the thought of someone catching you is always in the back of your mind.

After holding my chin up, ignoring the pain and pushing myself throughout the final 30 km to Bayswater I managed to convincingly hold in to my overnight 3rd placing and take home the bronze medal in the men's K1 category. Crossing the line was an amazing experience; I was lost for words but absolutely ecstatic. It is hard to know what to say or do after 9 ½ hours of racing in two days when you have only wanted to reach the finish. Therefore when you finally do, and with a successful result it is a little overwhelming.

Admittedly, during the final 2 hours of the race, you almost convince yourself that once is enough, however upon crossing the finish and with the return of rational thought



AVON DESCENT - CONTINUED

to my weary mind I was certain I would return to WA and compete in another Avon Descent. The Avon Decent is a wonderful event, expedition or personal challenge. Every year hundreds and hundreds competitors each take their own sense of reward, achievement and personal satisfaction away from their performance while the thousands of supporters and spectators return to the river banks to soak up the amazing race atmosphere. I will definitely return to race again.

I would like to make special mention of the generous support I received from Terry and Jenny Bolland and all the

crew at Canoeing Down Under; Grant Pepper, Steve Myers and the Myers family, John Bates and to all the fantastic people of the Ascot Kayak club for welcoming me into their paddling community. Finally I would like to thank the race organisers, sponsors and supporters for running such a fantastic event.

Any paddlers looking for a challenge, or needing a mid-winter training goal as I did; I would urge you to consider the Avon. The "world's greatest white water race" provides a wonderful journey and a memorable experience to all competitors.

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NEWS: SEARCH FOR THE LOST TOWER

The Lost Tower Expedition should be an adventure in the grandest sense of the word, a self propelled journey in one of the most ferocious corners of our planet, Patagonia. The icecaps of the southern tip of South America have long been objects of mysterious fascination and the unbelievable winds that howl across their wastes have commanded awed respect.

Patagonia Icecap: This expedition began with a glimpse from a plane window, high above the Patagonian wilds, of an irresistible, mystery peak surrounded by a sea of ice. Four years of research has identified the peak (we think!) as an unclimbed, unnamed spire, 'The Lost Tower', in the middle of the Northern Patagonian Icecap. To get to it is a mammoth undertaking and involves a north-south traverse of the entire icecap. We will approach the northern end of the ice by coastal freighter and then kayak through the Chilean Fiords. Converting our kayaks into sleds we will drag them laboriously up little known glacial systems to

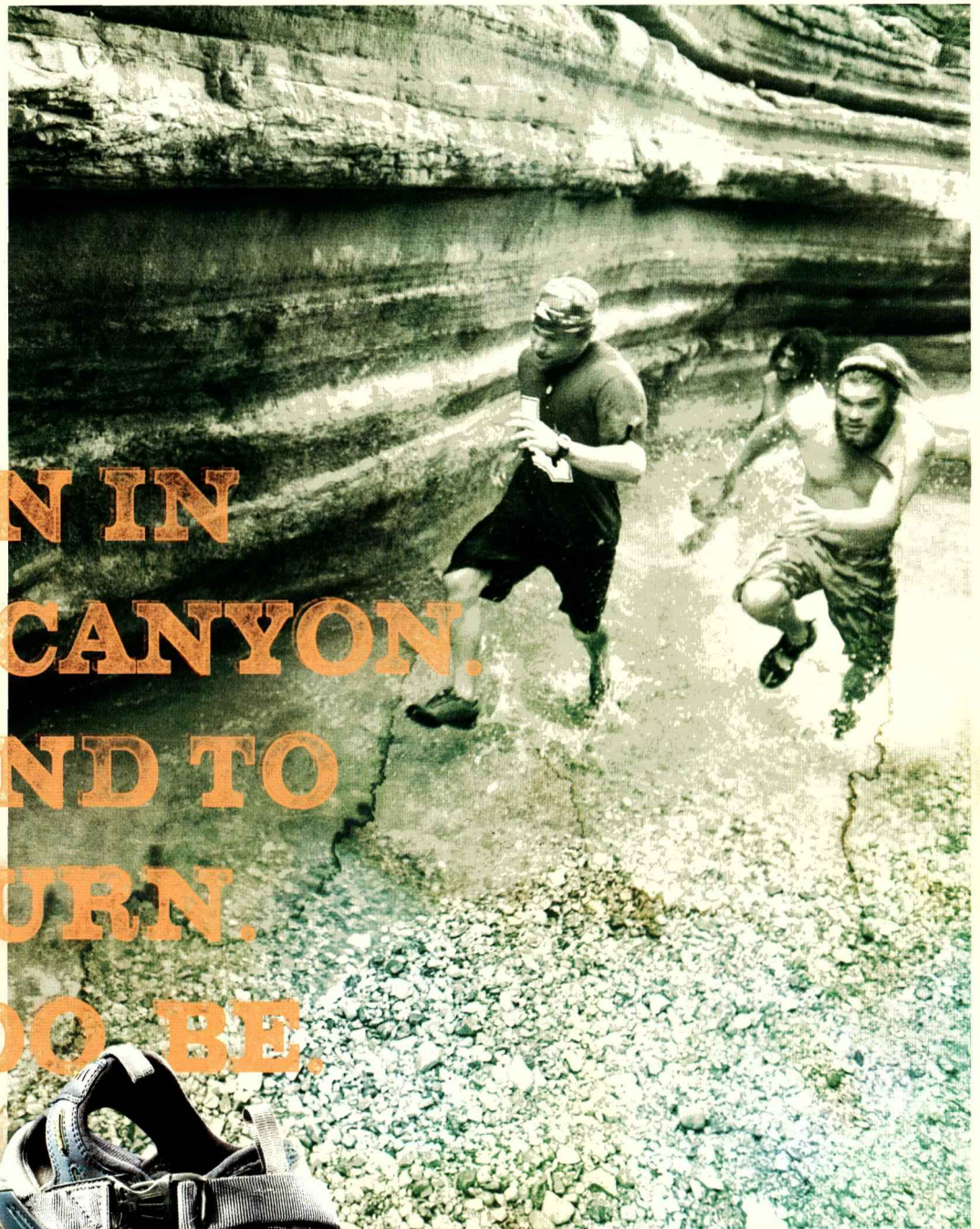
access the icecap. Once on flatter, less crevassed terrain we will head south for over 100kms using skis and 'kites' to reach the 'Lost Tower'. An attempt to make the first ascent of this peak will be followed by a new exit route from the icecap down glacial systems leading us south-west to a terminal river. After making a likely first descent of this river we will paddle back into the Chilean Fiords and onto the small fishing village of Tortel.

With three months to go, planning is reaching a frenetic pace! This trip is a mobile journey, which means lugging all our gear with us; food and fuel for 40 days, paddling gear, climbing gear, filming gear- our legs start to wobble just thinking about it. With this in mind, weight has obviously been at the forefront of our slightly worried thinking. Some great sponsors are supplying lightweight gear for the trip, which will be carried in Dagger Approach kayaks - that will end up being very confused by the lack of time on the water! The journey begins November 13th.

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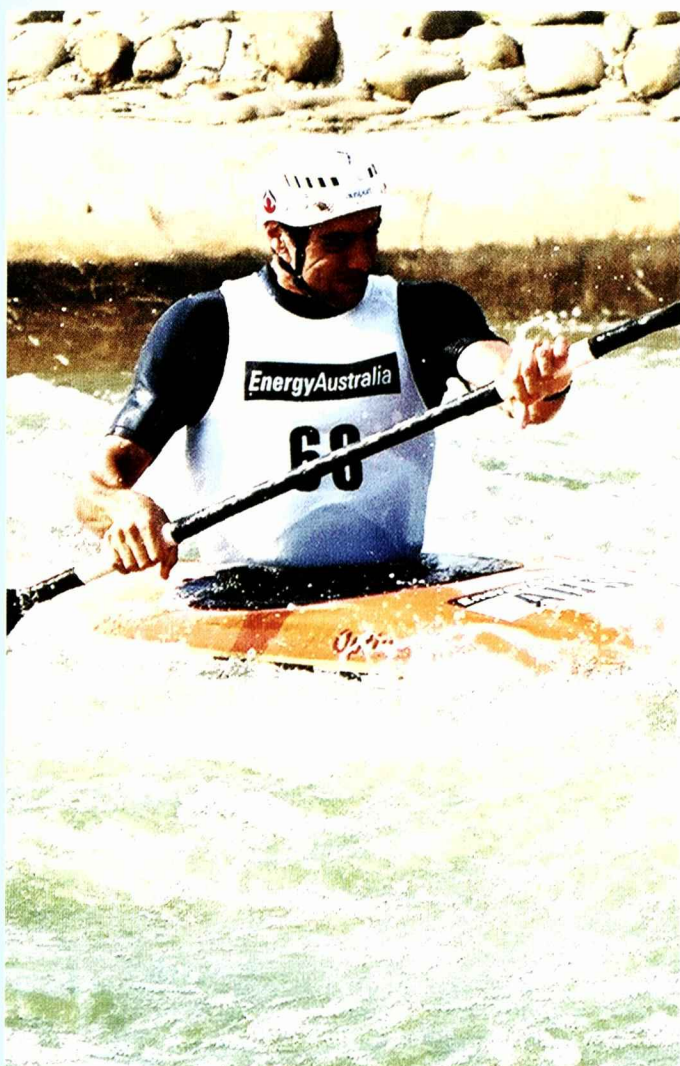
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NEWS:

SLALOM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRAP

After many years of competing on artificial courses and becoming a stadium sport, wildwater slalom has returned to its natural roots for the Worlds Championships in Foz do Iguacu in Brazil. The results showed many great paddlers on the podium, but some disappointments as the hard course claimed victims.

The Hochschorners (C2 Wind 415) were the first to paddle to victory. After huge success at all the world cups this year, the Hochschorners rounded off the season with an



impressive 8 sec gap over second place. The Italian C2 crew Bennetti / Massoero proved their fitness and skill after a return from injury to claim the bronze.

The Skantar brothers however, did not have such good luck. Although they were highly motivated by 3rd place in the semifinal, a 50 second penalty in the final saw them out of medal contention.

Australian hopes rested with C2 crew, Mark Bellofiore and Lachie Milne. In their semi final run, Bellofiore and Milne finished in thirteenth position, just under three seconds outside the time required to make the top ten and a final run. The crew finished ninth nation overall in the Olympic qualification rankings, and will now have to qualify an Olympic slot at the Oceania continental qualification next March.

The C1 class shaped up as a classic battle. Michal Martikan (C1 Michal Martikan 07) defeated his long time rival, Tony Estanget, and managed to claim another medal. 2005 World Champion Robin Bell claimed the bronze and an Olympic slot for Australia,

The winning form continued in Ladies K1, where Jennifer Bongardt (K1 350 S) improved on her 2006 silver medal performance to take the gold in a tense competition. Elena Kaliska (K1 Sting M) finished second; very motivating result for Elena after not so successful season.

Kate Lawrence was the best placed Australian in the women's kayak event finishing in 19th position, A result that put Australia high enough in the nation rankings to earn Olympic qualification in the K1 women's event.

In the K1 young Sebastien Combot surprised all and took Gold. Australia did not fare as well with Warwick Draper finishing 24th, a two second penalty separating the Australian from an Olympic Qualification place in this event. Robert Parker finished 31st. Australia will have the opportunity to earn an Olympic place in the K1 event at next year's Oceania Continental Qualification at Penrith in March, where they must finish ahead of New Zealand.

For a full list of results and photos refer to <http://cbca.org.br/foz2007/english>.

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NEWS:

TEVA LEA EXTREME RACE

BY STEWART BENNETT - RAPID DESCENT RACING,
WWW.RAPIDDESCENTRACING.BLOGSPOT.COM

The 5th annual Teva Lea Extreme Race was again, the highlight of the winter white water calendar in Tasmania and another memorable weekend for competitors, spectators and sponsors alike. 2007 boasted the largest field of local, interstate and international competitors in the race's short but colorful history. The standard of creek and extreme boating demonstrated by the competitors was a testimony to the increasing depth and popularity of extreme kayaking in Tasmania and Australia.

The Lea River is a steep and beautiful natural flow river nestled on the edge of the Tasmanian highlands (not far from Cradle Mountain). The river level on Saturday was low-medium flow which was absolutely perfect for the race in regards to participation and safety. There were 25 teams entered and also a reasonable spectator and rescue fleet of boaters also.

Hobart's Dan Hall and Justin Boocock won this year's main event collecting the infamous "Bull" trophy; 2006 champions Andrew Maynard and myself finished 2nd, followed by Ben Maynard and Tanya Faux in 3rd. Carol Hurst and Kate Mollison dominated the women's division, and also recorded a top 10 finish outright. After the Saturday's main race; Ben, Andrew, Dan and I decided to make the most of the water and did three more runs down the river. It was just great to be out paddling down a flowing and beautiful river with your mates. All day spent amongst an atmosphere of adventure and adrenaline, arising from the enthusiastic kayaking community embracing the event and the weekend's action. The presentation evening and dinner evolved into a great party with live bands rocking the crowd, dancing and partying until the early hours of Sunday.

For Sunday's race the river had again risen; seemingly much whiter, fluffier and bouncier than the Saturday.

There were two separate races on Sunday. The top 8 paddlers from Saturday's competition were racing head to head (mass start) down the course to determine the fastest boater of the weekend while the next 12 ranked paddlers competed in a ball race (always promising mayhem). The ball race paddlers were set off about 5 minutes before the mass start race final so therefore we were racing through all the carnage of the ball race. The river had kept rising and was now solid white-water, very pushy and with some solid holes. I got thoroughly smashed at Plastic Surgeon, somehow managing to negotiate the main falls backwards, upside down and boofing completely airborne of the main fall in this position landing upside down and on my head. I rolled and continued to race, the crowd was obviously impressed and yes; this was recorded on video.

Dan won the final race establishing himself as champion of the Lea; Ben second and Andrew third. I was pretty shaken after my little episode at Surgeon and did not paddle too well for the remainder of the race.

After the head to head final, we decided to do a third run for the day down the continually rising and increasingly challenging river. By this time the river had risen to a level higher than I had ever seen or paddled before. It was one of those trips where you are driven by a mixture of anxiety and adrenaline. We charged it, running everything blind in familiarity, partly because we had to paddle hard to hit all the lines and punch all the holes and part because the river was still rising and we were keen to get through the canyon before it got too high. Each rapid and waterfall delivered its own surprise punch and each paddler was humbled by the river at some point during the run. We all managed to spend time underwater, upside down. Many of us took interesting approaches, lines and landings of the Surgeon falls. One paddler (who shall remain unnamed) receiving a thorough flogging in a hole and swimming close to the end of the trip.

We made it to the lake, stoked, excited and satisfied with what had been an awesome day and a ripper weekend of paddling. The paddling was tops, the river flows were sweet, the weather was rubbish (as usual) and the Teva Lea Extreme race was another huge success.

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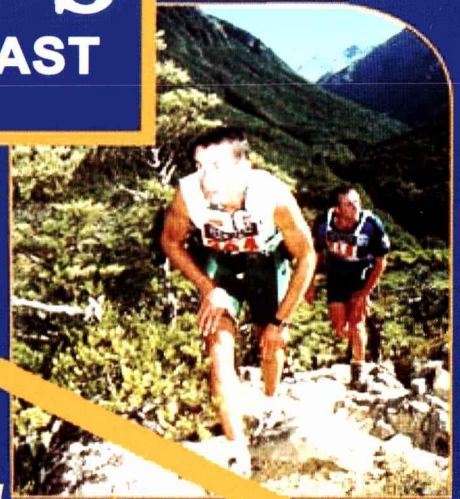
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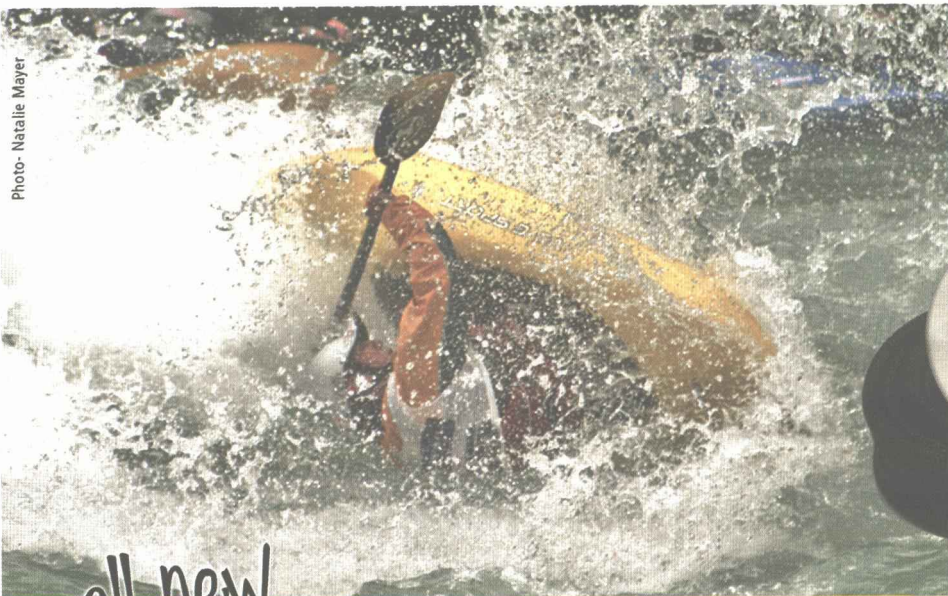
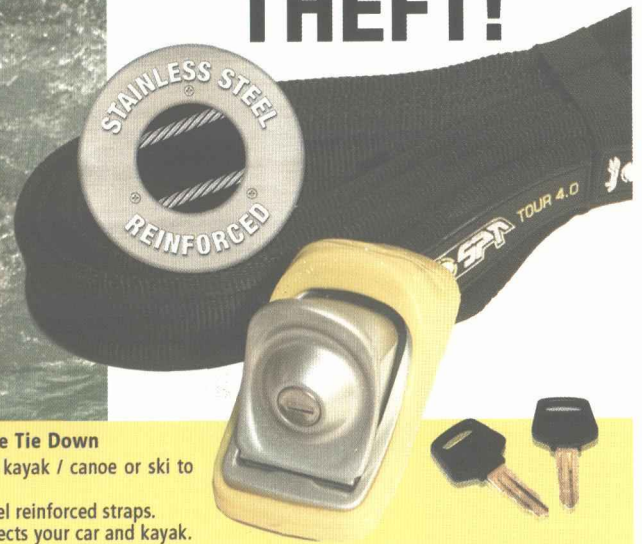


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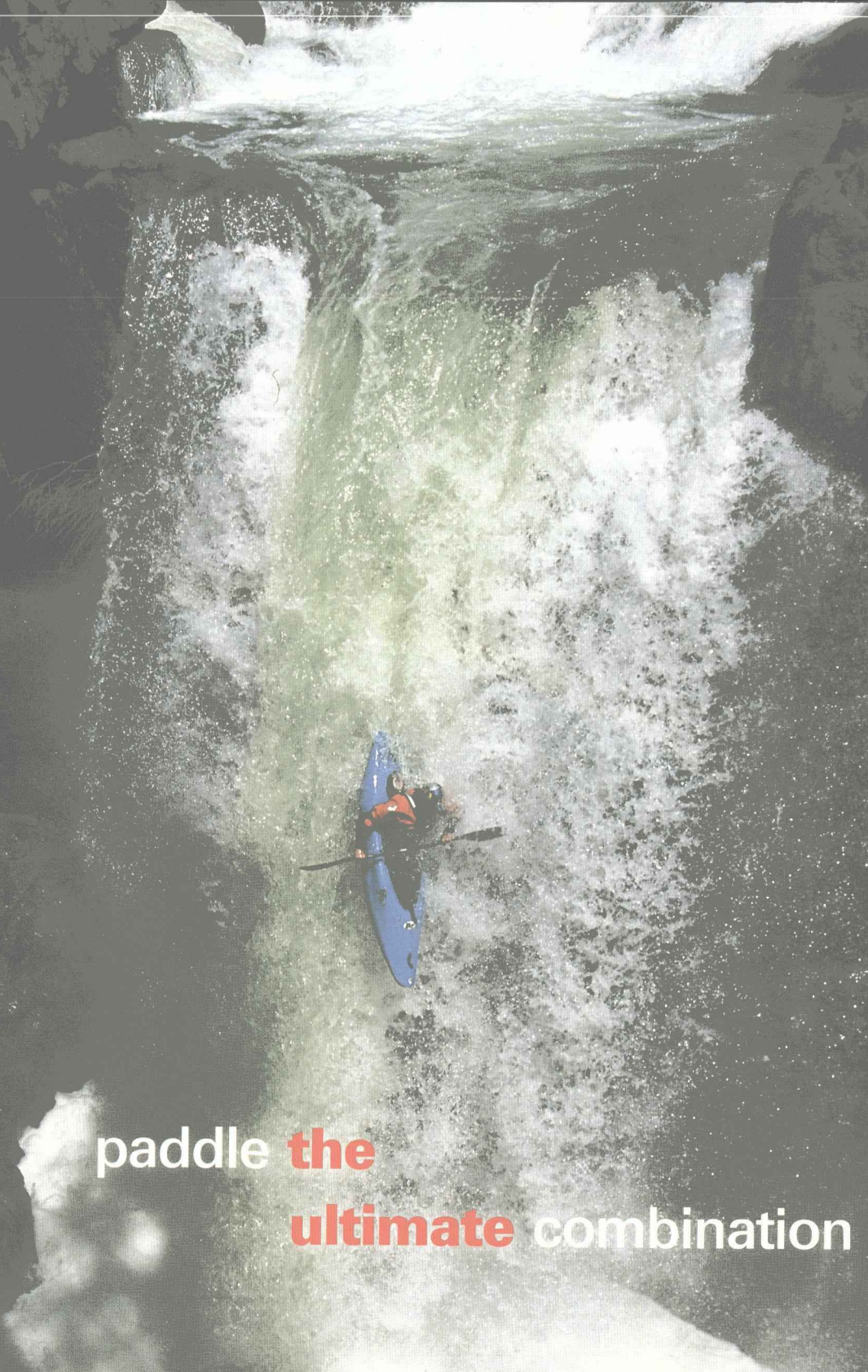
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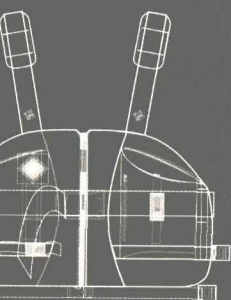
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BRIDGE TO BEACH 2007 DEAN GARDINER

OCEAN RACING

Sydney Harbour once again played host to what is now Australia's biggest ocean paddling event. Four hundred paddlers lined up under the harbour bridge and raced their way to Manly Cove in perfect Sydney Autumn conditions. Along with the paddlers two hundred ocean swimmers took on the grueling event. Racing as individuals, four and two person relay teams all took off ninety minutes before the paddlers.

Craft of all shapes and sizes, competitors of ages and abilities make this event truly unique. World Champions on the fast Fenn ocean racing style boats lined up with first timers on the super stable Bic plastic boats. Obviously, the pace differed between the two but the objective was the same, to get to Manly as quick as possible.

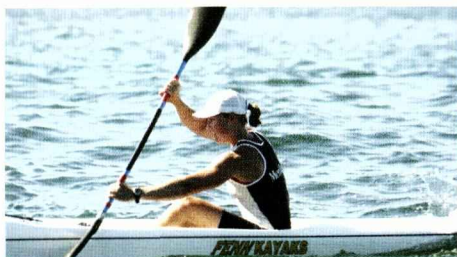
Tim Jacobs ate up the eleven kilometer race in well under the hour winning the event, some of the less competitive took over two hours. For spectators it was bow to stern surf skis, sea kayaks and sit on tops from Manly in a continuous line to the city and they didn't stop coming for nearly two hours. The battle up front was hectic with Jacobs, Queensland's Dane Sloss and South African

Daryl Bartho trading blows for most of the race. Jacobs pulled away in the final third of the event to take home the winners cheque and the prestige of winning such a race. Yanda Nossiter continued her dominance of surf ski racing on the women's side with an easy win over Trudi Barnes and adventure racing legend Christie Sym.

One person not on the line was last year's winner Dave Kissane. A niggling shoulder injury has kept Kissane off the water but he is hoping to be back in action for the June surf ski world cup in South Africa.

"Ocean paddling took a giant step forward after today's event and has clearly positioned itself as the new growth sport" said Kissane. "Events like this one are what's keeping guys involved in sport, you know the time the race starts, you have a pretty good idea of what time it will finish, and you finish at a place like Manly Wharf where you can easily enjoy the social activities after the event"

The ocean racing series for 2008 promises some fantastic events around Australia. The Bridge to Beach event will be held in early March and is a truly remarkable race.





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GRIZZLY BEAR COUNTRY

RUNNING THE STEIN - NORTHWEST CANADA

TEXT AND PHOTOS:
JAMES THORPE



The unmistakable calm silence of the wild relieved the constant heavy drone of the twin engine 'Otter' float plane. We opened the doors to the smell of cedars and the chill of glaciers and clambered out onto the skids to launch our kayaks into Stein lake. Before re-kindling the engines and disappearing into the summer blue the pilot informed us that we had just landed in the biggest grizzly bear reserve in North America. Unperturbed by the presence of our fuzzy friends we paddled out of the lake and into the Stein river. The Stein fed by the glaciers of the Coast Mountains in British Columbia snakes and cascades its way through the Stein Valley Nlaka'pamux Heritage Park for 65km until it meets and melts into the milkshake brownwaters of the

Fraser River. The Stein drops some 2640ft in its 40 miles and presents paddlers with a varied range of whitewater from granite slides in its upper reaches to pushy creek-boating on its lower sections.

Four Canadians, two New Zealanders and me managed to get three days off our rafting commitments in late July and quickly packed our kayaks full of space cake and homemade moonshine in readiness for the trip. As we paddled across the lake I couldn't help but laugh at Sasha who was already falling behind. Sasha as well as two other team members had chosen to paddle Eskimo Topo's on a multi day creek run, the inherent ballast of gear had certainly

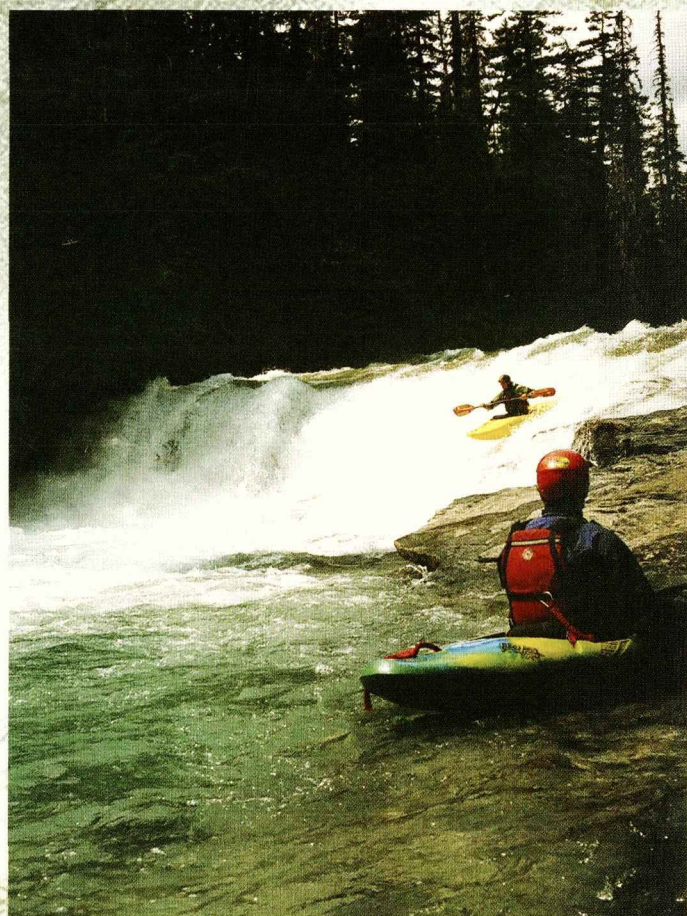
“THE PILOT INFORMED US THAT WE HAD JUST LANDED IN THE BIGGEST GRIZZLY BEAR RESERVE IN NORTH AMERICA.”



compromised the performance of their 'Jelly beans'. The waterline was almost up to Sasha's cockpit as he lent back to try stopping the nose from submerging.

The first day on the Stein is really fun. It drops steeply from the lake and at most horizon lines a forty to sixty foot granite slide welcomes a smile. Most of the slides are straight forward provided you don't mess up your line and go upside down or get surfed in a hole at the bottom of the slide. Caleb took a swim testing a new line on one of the early slides. He made the final boof but it wasn't enough as the sticky hole sucked him back in for a good smackdown. We all stood on a rock above cheering on his gallant survival skills until having to hustle a throw rope to him as he swam like a salmon. Towards the end of the day the slides mellow and continuous rock gardens stretch into the evening. We staggered into a flat piece of forest suitable enough for our first nights camp and began the ritualistic chores of erecting clothes lines, gathering firewood and firing up the stove for a brew.

The limp flames of the fire burnt a soft orange glow under a blackness only soothed by the freckled vista of stars. The sound of the river an ageless chorus rising above the subtle tones of the forest. We sat around the fire filling our bellies with food and moonshine our spirits high from an exciting river day. Caleb proved the potency of his moonshine by spiting a mouthful across the fire creating a massive fireball all the way back to his lips. It was comforting to know that if we ran out of fuel for the stove we could possible run on the moonshine. The downside of paddling in a valley full of bears is that everything must be bear proofed. Food must be hung in trees and cooking must be done away from where you sleep. It's hard to find a tree that a bear could not either climb or just push over in a desperate attempt for a meal. We eventually found a sturdy suitable tree with an overhanging branch to hang our bag of goodies from. Weary from the combination of moonshine and fatigue we climbed into our sleeping bags hoping that we wouldn't get eaten by a hungry grizzly during the night.



'MOST OF THE SLIDES ARE STRAIGHT FORWARD PROVIDED YOU DON'T MESS UP YOUR LINE AND GO UPSIDE DOWN OR GET SURFED IN A HOLE AT THE BOTTOM'

GRIZZLY BEAR COUNTRY, CONTINUED



GRIZZLY BEAR COUNTRY, CONTINUED

The second day on the Stein is relatively boring. The gradient decreases and the river transforms from technical whitewater to slow and meandering. The river is also log jammed in many places. These log jams are sometimes massive, the compilation of years of build up. A few of the log jams we could tentively Eskimo roll under or paddle through but a few were major undertakings, one in particular took at least 30 minutes to climb over. It was only the throat burning mind altering moonshine that softened this arduous middle day. We set up camp on a river beach just upstream of the start of the bottom gorge. We had seen a few bears during the day so a couple of the team were a bit on edge. As most of us sat around the campfire that night getting drunk and telling river stories, Sasha sat with his back to the fire, his eyes peeled on the dark forest. His worst fears became reality when his terrified whispers woke the group just after sunrise on the third morning. As we lay in our sleeping bags like giant burrito's a Grizzly bear wandered around the camp sniffing the strange plastic logs and carbon sticks. The Grizzly eventually lost interest in our kayaks and we sighed with relief as he/she retreated into the forest. We decided to skip breakfast and have an early start on the river as Sasha jostled us out of our sleeping bags and into our kayaks.

The final day of the Stein is a bobby dazzler. It doesn't take long after entering the gorge for the whitewater to hot up. Many of the rapids are steep class four and clotted with holes, on several occasions these hungary holes caught the boys in the Topo's by suprise. We in the longer boats would take it in turns to line up our friends being surfed then launch our boats with speed onto theirs thus flushing them out. It was a fun games, kind of like playing kayak 'Ten pin' but a couple of times the game backfired and the striker go power-looped off the topo and then there were two surfing. Most of the rapids are boat scoutable, which is a blessing as we had been accumulating hornet bites whilst scouting on the two previous days. I was winning with six bites including one just above my right eye which was so swollen that it was impairing my vision. Further down the gorge we stopped on the river right side to have a look at some well preserved first nation cave paintings. The Stein Valley is incredibly rich in indigenous history and

the key reason why the valley was turned into a Heritage park in 1995.

Late in the day the gradient began to ease up and the dusty hills flanking the Fraser River grew closer as the Stein valley reseeded into our past. We stopped at the confluence of the Stein and Fraser to savour the moment and drink the last of the moonshine before entering British Columbia's largest volume river, which swept us down to the lake-out at Lytton. The Stein is a great little river and I would recommend it to anyone with a few days off and a zest for a journey.



'HIS WORST FEARS BECAME REALITY WHEN HIS TERRIFIED WHISPERS WOKE THE GROUP JUST AFTER SUNRISE ON THE THIRD MORNING. AS WE LAY IN OUR SLEEPING BAGS LIKE GIANT BURRITO'S A GRIZZLY BEAR WANDERED AROUND THE CAMP.'

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BREAKING THE DROUGHT - NZ WHITEWATER

TEXT AND PHOTOS
BEN MAYNARD

Four paddlers, creek boats, tents, airline tickets, a cheap and cramped hire car, a pair of home-made roof racks, 1 extreme race, 3 heli trips, 18 rivers, 22 days. This was the drought-relief recipe that Tim Trevaskis, Ben McArthur (Macca), Andrew Maynard and Ben Maynard (Toad) concocted during January and February this year. After a long dry winter we spent 2 weeks in the South Island and 1 week in the North Island of New Zealand hunting down water, and were not disappointed.....

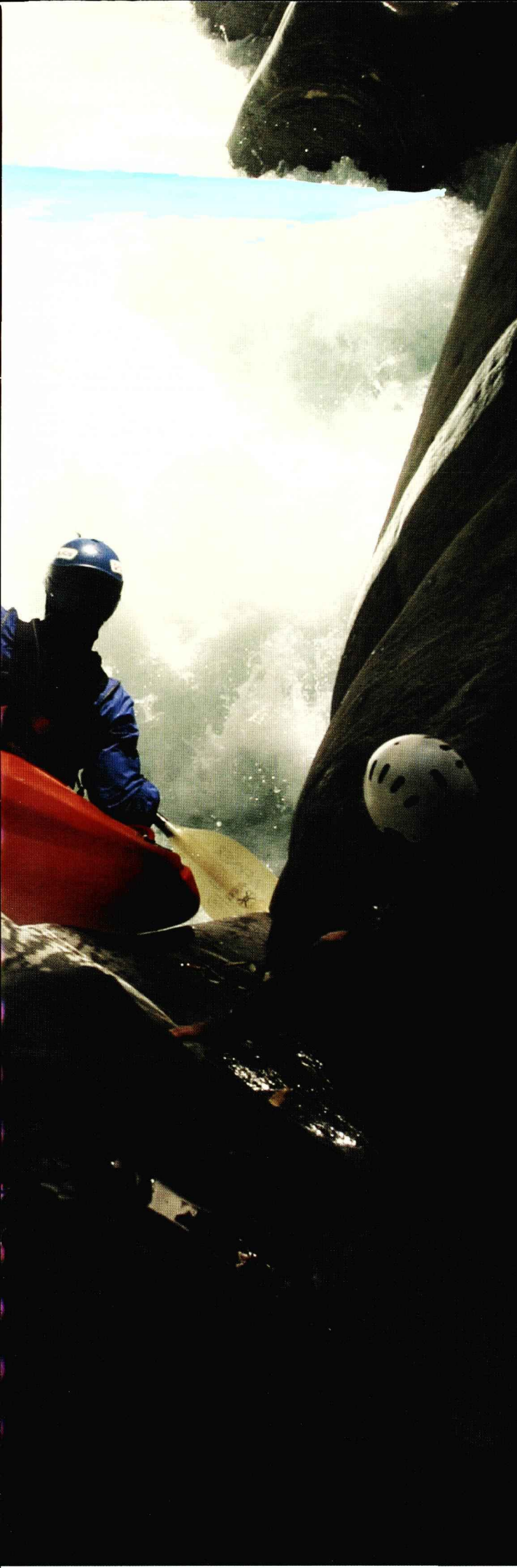
The trip started well with Macca losing his passport at Melbourne Airport before we eventually arrived in Christchurch later that day. From there we picked up our zippy-round-town Nissan AD (who has heard of that model?) fitted with super dodgy roof racks and headed off for Queenstown. After a long travel day involving replacing first the front and then the rear roof racks with bomber strength custom-made jobs, we hit the Kawaura River to blow out the cobwebs. A trip down the Shotover the next day was to follow, with the delights of Skipper's Canyon being enjoyed by Toad on 3 occasions – once on the drive in, once on the drive shuttle out, and once more on the run shuttle back in where he was passed by a number of vehicles but only managed to score lifts totaling about 2 km of the 20 km route!

We then headed to Milford Sound. The day we arrived in Milford we caught the tail end of a 24 hour period of heavy rain, there were waterfalls and small creeks shooting off the surrounding mountains of Doubtful and Milford Sounds in all directions. Everything was in a state of flash flood, so that day we limited our paddling to the lower section of the Tutoko River for some big volume fun. There was so much water force going down the river you could hear the rocks moving underneath you as you paddled. After that we paddled around Milford Sound to the big waterfall, enjoying some big standing wave surfing on the way courtesy of the low tide and flooded rivers pouring into the Sound.

After Milford Sound we went up to the West Coast to the famous Mahinapau, near Hokitika. On the way, paddling the Fox River, which comes out of the bottom of Fox Glacier, very cold water! My new pogies (bought in anticipation of downriver training in Tassie over winter) paid for themselves in only 30 mins of paddling! We got a few bemused looks and questions from tourists on the walk up to the glacier carrying our kayaks.....then it was on the water for a fast grade 3-4 read-and-run descent.

Three great days of great whitewater followed, as we based ourselves in Mahinapau. All of the days were spent heli-boating. The Wanganui provided great grade 4-5 paddling, with options for portages on all the major rapids. The Arahura was completely different, with good clean creeking amidst crystal clear water – the guidebook rated the Arahura as one of the premier runs in New Zealand and it would be hard to disagree. The last day was an epic on the Waitaha. We were joined by Kevin Austin for the day, and on the way up in the chopper we were able





to check out the last gorge and pick out some landmarks for the mandatory portage that had been recommended in the guide-book. All the rest of the rapids above this gorge looked very solid, even from the air! Once on the river at about 10am, we were in the thick of it. I had a roll in the first 5 min which was a bit of an awakening and a realization that on this river we had gone up a level again. Lots of 4+ to 5 rapids, with a fair bit of scouting, and ample paddling for those who wanted to bite off a bit. The trip was really on my limit and I was happy to walk a number of rapids and escape from some with only rolling! We had to all portage several nasty rapids, one of which involved clambering around steep and slippery rocks above a grade 6 move and then a breath-taking seal launch into the last hole of the rapid as it was the only option we had! "Scared-stiff" did not quite sum up my state at the time! (Thanks for the push Kevin!)

We reached the gorge portage at about 5pm and we were running tight for time and food. My food supply for the whole day had been a jar of peanut butter, the other boys weren't much better off with a very limited supply of bread (which turned out to be moldy!) and some muesli bars. We hadn't quite got around to buying food after the long trip the previous day and the early start for the Waitaha. I found the peanut butter very hard to stomach (what a surprise!) and consequently had very little to eat during the day. The portage took 3 hours of hard-work, dragging and roping and lowering the boats, but at least there was a track of sorts. During this I completely hit the wall and was very happy to finish the portage and get back on the river just as light started to fade. Absolutely buggered, we ran the last 30 min of grade 3-4 river and then paddled small shingle races in the dark to reach the car at 10 pm. A long, long day! Back at camp and Macca and Kevins girlfriend Šarka had set up a candlelight vigil and were just about to call search and rescue when we arrived home! All's well that ends well!

We had a great last week on the North Island doing the Okere Falls and Awesome/Lower Gnarly Gorge runs on the Kaituna, as well as the Rangitiki, Rangitiki, and Waiohono Rivers, and a few more runs down the Wairoa for good measure. We also spent a day on the Waikato River, in the morning doing safety for Czech paddler Honza Lasko as he ran Huka Falls at a record 250 cumecs (!!!!!), then in the afternoon ran the last rapid of the Aratiatia section, and paddled further down the river for the mandatory play session on the Full James wave.

Without doubt the highlight of the last week (and maybe the entire trip) was the Awesome/Lower Gnarly Gorge section of the Kaituna. Lots of un-scoutable whats-around-the-corner box-canyon style moss-covered eerily-lit rapids in the gorge sections, which made for 3-4 hours of stunning scenery when you had the time to look up! Bay of Plenty Electricity are about to dam the Awesome Gorge – this will drown one of the more spectacular paddling trips in the world as well as cutting off the flow to the Gnarly Gorge, downstream of the proposed dam. So get and paddle it before it's too late!

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Paddled, cycled and walked 16,000km around USA
Paddled many other regions of Australia and the world
Held a world record for paddling 220.8km in 24 hours
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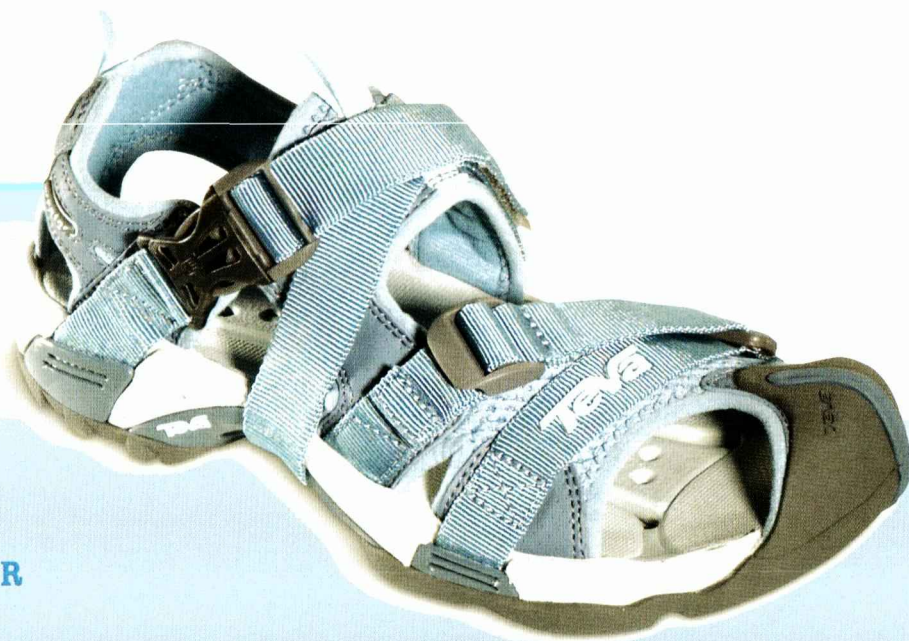
H2O Audio's iS2 Waterproof Case for iPod

With H2O Audio's latest iS2 Waterproof Case for iPod Shuffle (2nd Generation) you can now enjoy your personal playlists while swimming, surfing, wakeboarding, kayaking, snowboarding and more. The sleek, light-weight design of the silicon sleeve with exoskeleton adds to the cool factor of getting groovy in the wet. A sports armband is included in the pack for hassle-free music accompaniment. Full functionality of the control pad is also maintained so you can stop or play as you go, without the need to remove your iPod shuffle from the waterproof casing.

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PRODUCT REVIEW



TEVA KARNALI WRAPTOR

This great looking shoe delivers what it promises: Teva writes, "Revolutionary design, uncompromising fit – Teva's new Karnali Wraptor brings unparalleled performance to the world of sports sandals. Patent-pending Drain Frame technology allows water to drain through the midsole, while Wraptor™ Fit Technology ensures a stable, secure ride wherever your adventures lead you". In reality, this sandal is comfortable for the long haul, and really it doesn't matter why, as long as it wears well and comfortably.

After 3 days of continuous wear, I can swear to no blisters, and dry feet even after being in and out of the water regularly. The only issues are things like the length of the adjusters for those with wider or higher feet, and also the fact that the webbing outside still dries at the same rate

as in other sandals. Additionally, it's not a kayakers shoe, but would be ideally suited to rafting, or other water sports where room is not a problem. Easy to get into and out of, this is a great buy!

Features:

- Patent-pending Drain Frame Technology
- Patented Wraptor™ Fit Technology
- Integrated toe protection
- Quick-release buckle for easy entry/exit
- Durable pull-cord for quick adjustment
- Microban® zinc based anti-microbial protection
- Multiple drainage ports

Bic Sport Kalao (3-person sit-on-top kayak)

The Kalao is a veritable 4x4 of the kayak world. Equally at ease on the sea or rivers, for fun or for fishing, it's the kayak for all adventures. Like all BIC Sport kayaks it features plenty of innovations. The fluid, stable hull design makes it simple for a family of two adults and two children to all ride together in complete comfort. This is a purpose built 3 (adult) person sit-on-top, with 3 proper ergonomic seats. Essentially, the Kalao combines capacity of the old style family canoe, with the safety of a Sit-on-Top kayak! It can be also be adapted to take an electric motor. The largely flat hull design with very little water draught is extremely stable and allows the kayak to go almost anywhere. Aspects such as storing your belongings while kayaking, carrying and transporting your kayak have all received detailed attention. The fishing version has additional features, including: 4 rod positions, 2 large watertight boxes, plenty of storage space. It's also unsinkable. RRP: \$AUD 1399



Bic Sport Deluxe Backrest:

This backrest is ideal for the fisherman who needs extra rod space. Its thick, ergonomic foam cushioning is comfortable, but most importantly of all there is a rear pocket with 2 integral fishing rod holders. RRP: \$AUD 119.95.



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SeaSpecs are made for Extreme Conditions. The glasses come with a patented strap, High Quality Impact Resistant Polarized Extreme Lenses, which provide 100% UVA & UVB Protection! SeaSpecs Grey Polarized Lenses are the most popular lenses and come in all of our Models/ Frames and are great for all conditions. SeaSpecs Brown Polarized Lenses, come in our Black Frame (our "Sunset Specs) and are excellent for cloudy, early morning and late afternoon, low light conditions.

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www.seaspecs.com

Harmony Kayak Cart

If getting your kayak to the water is proving difficult, you may want to consider a kayak cart. This great method keeps you independent, and is also collapsible for convenient storage. There is no need to assemble the cart, it comes ready to use. It is light weight, and also comes with tie down straps and is suitable for almost any kayak or canoe. RRP: \$AUD 145.
www.harmonygear.com





Some people say that life is all about compromise. Well after paddling the latest boat added to the Dagger line up, that's about where I'd put it. But I say this with a very positive spin. The obvious feature that hits you straight away is the large roomy cockpit. Friends of my who like recreational paddling much prefer the sit on variety of kayaks. This is because they do not like feeling trapped inside a boat. The Echo is the next best thing. I stand at 186cm and my feet were barely inside the boat. If you ever tipped over you would automatically fall straight out. The Echo is designed with the fisherman in mind. A fishing pod can be added to the front of the cockpit opening which will hold all the essentials such as hooks, sinkers etc, GPS and of course the rods.

The next outstanding feature is its stability. I tackled rolling swells, choppy small surf and small rapids and not once did I come close to checking out the underwater world. There were also times when I had one of my three children sitting in the rear compartment. Even when they were slapping and splashing the water as we cruised along, the boat felt as solid as the 'Rock of Gibraltar'. And then was the time when all three were sitting on various parts of the kayak. What a hoot! While they tumbled off and heaved themselves back on, dad was sitting nice and dry inside the kayak.

The stability and roominess of the Echo makes it a very good fishing craft. Most of the fishing gear that would be required for a short trip could be stored in the cockpit area, especially behind the seat which is big enough to take an esky – to hold the catch of course. However, for anyone

wanting to stay away longer there is a rear sealed storage area capable of storing a lot of camping gear or other extras.

Another feature that certainly makes the Echo enjoyable to paddle is the drop down skeg. It was most useful in rear quartering seas where I was able to maintain a straight course with few corrective strokes. It also came in handy on rivers and lakes. With the skeg up, the boat tended to slew either side when I stopped to take photos or check the scenery. However with the skeg down the boat kept a nice straight line. The only difficulty I had with the skeg (which is lowered by a cord located next to the cockpit), was that it didn't drop down immediately. Since it was made of plastic it tended to have neutral buoyancy and took some working to lower it completely. This could be easily solved by having a metal skeg or a weight fixed to it.

The Echo is a wide boat, which obviously explains its stability, however I was pleasantly surprised at the pace and distance I was able to cover. This would be a plus for the fisherman who knows his/her fishing spot and wants to get there quickly. Also with the skeg retracted, the Echo became a boat that was easy to manoeuvre, which would be handy for fishermen or environment friendly paddlers wanting to get into tight corners.

The Echo is principally a boat for people who love to fish but I would have no hesitations in recommending it for family use. While it won't handle lumpy surf or roaring rapids, it is comfortable in every other situation and is a craft that any age group would enjoy.

The Positives

- Very stable – easy to fish from
- Plenty of storage space
- Promotes a feeling of not being hemmed in
- Tracks well with skeg lowered
- Water tight rear compartment for camping/picnic gear
- Deck bungee cords to hold equipment
- Easy to adjust foot pegs and adjustable back rest

The Negatives

- On the heavy side – use a trolley to carry any distance
- Skeg difficult to lower



CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Roaring 40's Kayaking; 3 day Journey of Walks

This journey is for active people who are yet to embrace the joys of kayaking. You will be transported through the twists and turns of remote wilderness waterways on board the Roaring 40s seaworthy, six-metre, expedition tender. The interests and energies of you and your group will determine the day's activities. You may choose between short walks to places of cultural interest or spend more energy clambering up one of the surrounding hills to gain a panorama of the waterway. Accommodation is at the Forest Lagoon Standing camp, which offers a sheltered forest dining area, platform tents with standing headroom and a toilet facility. www.roaring40skayaking.com.au

Roaring 40's Kayaking 7 day expedition

Bathurst Harbour and Port Davey each has its own distinct character. One is virtually land-locked; its quiet serenity hiding a dark and mysterious spirit. The other is on the ocean side with a wild and unpredictable temperament. This expedition will take you from the still waters of Melaleuca Inlet through the "narrows" to the rolling ocean swells of Port Davey and, if conditions are suitable, beyond! Within the bounds of safety we will do our best to satisfy your desire to explore by kayak and by foot. Typically we travel 6 to 8 hours each day and stay at a new campsite most evenings. Whilst you won't need to be an expert paddler to participate, this expedition will offer challenges even if you are. This is an experience not to be missed. www.roaring40skayaking.com.au



NRS Clearwater PFD

The ventilated back panel of the Clearwater PFD is more comfortable and less bulky when you lean back in your boat. The flotation of this recreational PFD is concentrated in the front panels and up high on the back for a more natural sitting position. Large arm openings allow for unobstructed movement while paddling or rowing. Eight adjustment points let you easily customize the fit. Two large front pockets provide plenty of room for storage. The left front pocket includes a lanyard for keys. Design flotation: 7.5kg. RRP AUD \$118. www.nrsweb.com



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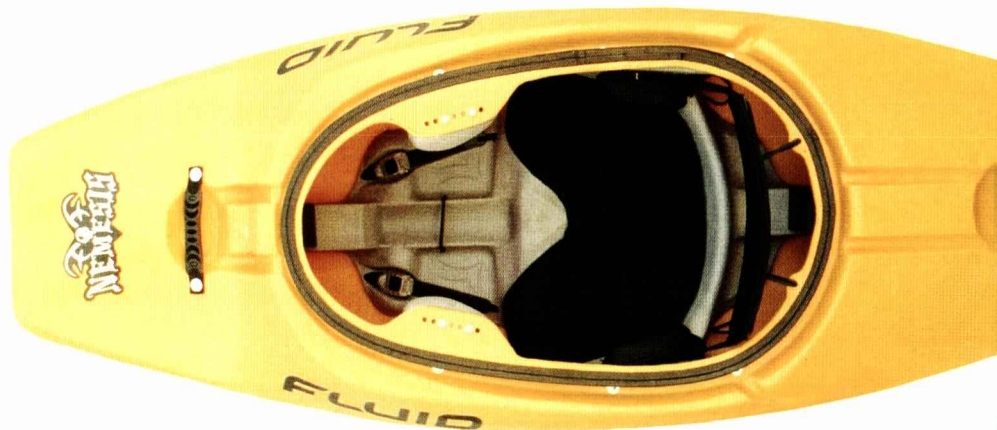
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Fluid Nemesis

The Nemesis is Fluid's new advanced freestyle machine. The boat is very fast and carves well for a "butt bouncer" style boat. It bounces big, is extremely controllable, and the volume distribution is perfect for hole moves. The chines and rocker profiles have been designed for landing combo moves without compromising the speed on the wave. The hull is loose and the releasability of the Nemesis is a key factor to the boat's performance. Fluid's outfitting has been updated for 07/08 providing a simple, solid and functional cockpit. Available in 3 sizes S, M and L. RRP AUD \$1695. www.kayak4play.com.au



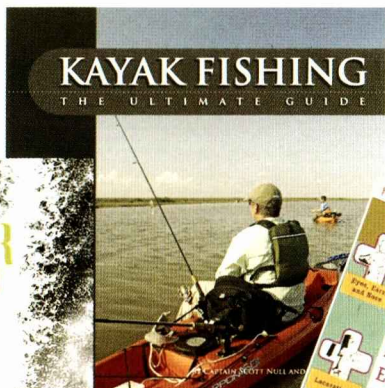
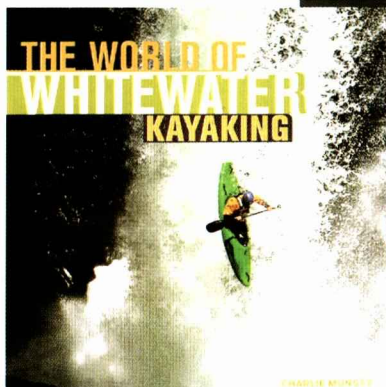
Books:-

Paddling With Kids

From toddlers to teenagers, sharing our love of the outdoors with children can be fun, rewarding - and sometimes challenging. How do you keep children interested while teaching them the proper way to hold the paddle or keep them safe when maneuvering through whitewater? Written by parents for parents, Paddling with Kids has the answers to these questions and many more. This must have guide is the tool you need to plan a paddling trip that is safe, fun, and memorable for you and your children. RRP \$29.95

The World Of Whitewater Kayaking

The world of white-water adventure has come a long way since 1869, when one-



armed Civil War veteran Major Wesley Powell led the first expedition down the Colorado River in wooden dories. In this book, one of the top young photographic talents on today's whitewater and expedition kayaking scenes shares a broad selection of images from his portfolio. He takes readers from the Himalayas to the river gorges of the Pacific Northwest, the coastal waters of British Columbia, and Alaska's Susitna River. RRP \$29.95

Paddlers' Guide For Medical Emergencies

This comprehensive emergency medical guide is designed for paddlers. Whether you're out for a Class-I float or a whitewater journey, this guide enables readers to prevent illness and injury, recognize illness and injury when it occurs, and implement appropriate treatment when needed. The author covers everything a paddler needs to know to stay alive and well on the water, from drowning to ear infections. RRP \$19.95

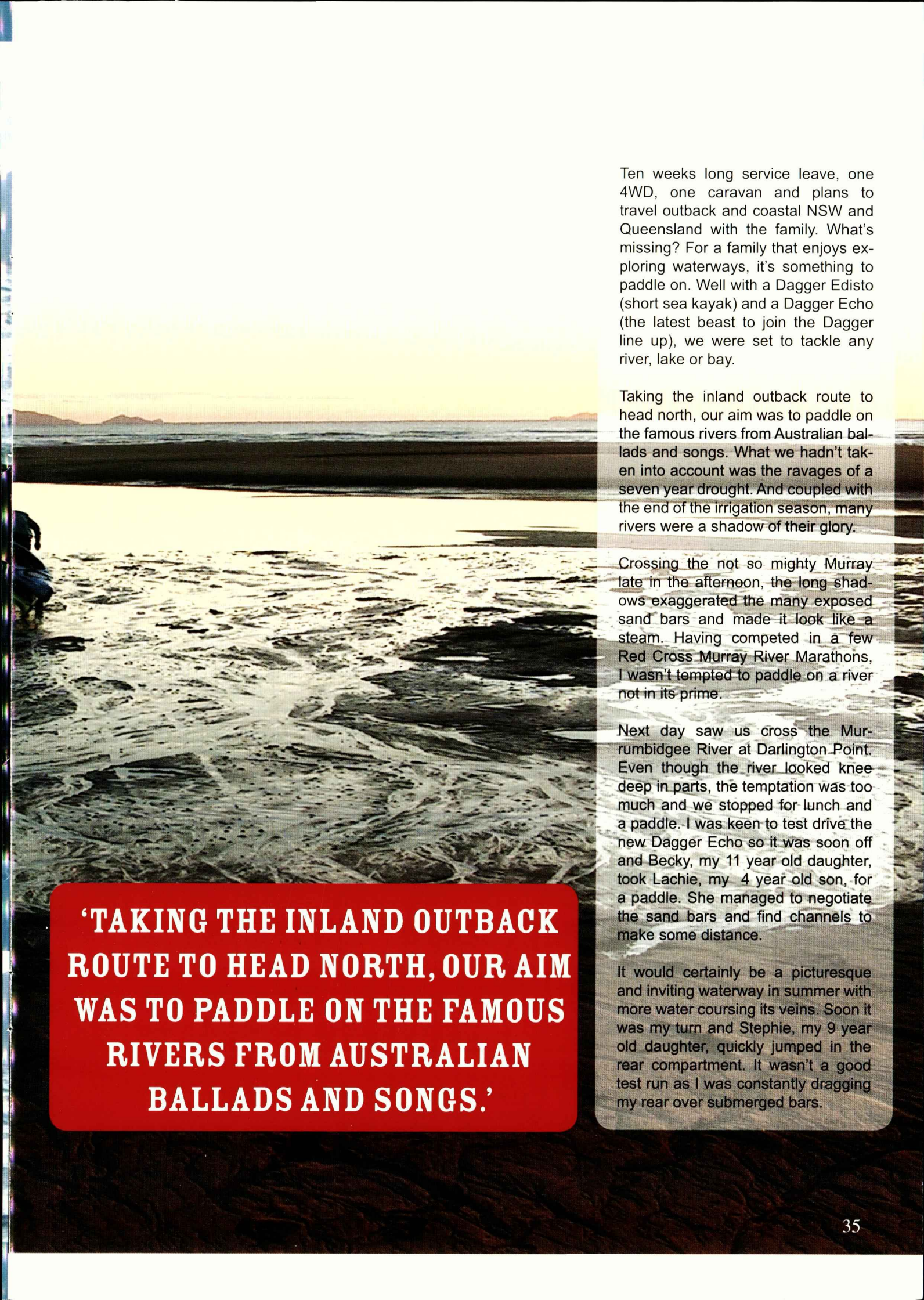
Kayak Fishing- The Ultimate Guide

Kayak fishing is one of the fastest growing kayak sports, thanks to its ease of use and the access it offers anglers to new and otherwise inaccessible waters. The Ultimate Guide to Kayak Fishing is the most comprehensive book on the sport, providing new kayak fisherman with a solid foundation of skills and concepts allowing a safe and comfortable entry into the sport. There are a wealth of tips and tricks that will help more experienced anglers get the most out of their time spent on the water. RRP \$34.95

PADDLING SAFARI

TEXT AND PHOTOS:
MATTHEW MANN





**'TAKING THE INLAND OUTBACK
ROUTE TO HEAD NORTH, OUR AIM
WAS TO PADDLE ON THE FAMOUS
RIVERS FROM AUSTRALIAN
BALLADS AND SONGS.'**

Ten weeks long service leave, one 4WD, one caravan and plans to travel outback and coastal NSW and Queensland with the family. What's missing? For a family that enjoys exploring waterways, it's something to paddle on. Well with a Dagger Edisto (short sea kayak) and a Dagger Echo (the latest beast to join the Dagger line up), we were set to tackle any river, lake or bay.

Taking the inland outback route to head north, our aim was to paddle on the famous rivers from Australian ballads and songs. What we hadn't taken into account was the ravages of a seven year drought. And coupled with the end of the irrigation season, many rivers were a shadow of their glory.

Crossing the not so mighty Murray late in the afternoon, the long shadows exaggerated the many exposed sand bars and made it look like a steam. Having competed in a few Red Cross Murray River Marathons, I wasn't tempted to paddle on a river not in its prime.

Next day saw us cross the Murrumbidgee River at Darling Point. Even though the river looked knee deep in parts, the temptation was too much and we stopped for lunch and a paddle. I was keen to test drive the new Dagger Echo so it was soon off and Becky, my 11 year old daughter, took Lachie, my 4 year old son, for a paddle. She managed to negotiate the sand bars and find channels to make some distance.

It would certainly be a picturesque and inviting waterway in summer with more water coursing its veins. Soon it was my turn and Stephanie, my 9 year old daughter, quickly jumped in the rear compartment. It wasn't a good test run as I was constantly dragging my rear over submerged bars.

It was then onto the Lachlan River which Banjo Patterson mentions in his ballad, 'Clancy of the Overflow'. Again it was a very pretty river with huge river red gums towering over the banks and green paddocks rolling down to the water's edge. But from our advantage point just off the Kidman Way, a portage would have been necessary every 100 metres. No thanks – I'm a paddler, not a masochist!

The lake at Cobar provided no joy as it was bone dry, so our next hope was the Darling River at Bourke. We arrived to hear the good news that it was flowing over the weir for the first time that year. We drove out there to check the situation for ourselves and yes there was a small stream of water pouring over the wall. Not exactly a scene for those downstream to get



excited about. The next day Becky and I drove further upstream, north of Bourke along the Kidman Way, to a popular spot called Mays Bend. The first thing that struck me was the colour of the water. So used to the dark brown water of Victorian rivers, the

Darling had a thick white clay look about it. We paddled some 7 kms upstream and I was surprised by the distinct absence of animal life or noise. No insects clicking or birds calling – deadly silence. I was also amazed by the number of large pipes and



**'MANY FELLOW TRAVELLERS
WARNED US ABOUT THE PERILS OF
VENTURING INTO CROC-INFESTED
WATERS.'**

pump houses that were dotted along the banks of the river. No wonder this river has struggled to survive!

Our next major stop was Charleville. I was keen to paddle on the Warrego River but after checking in with the Information Centre was redirected to the Ward River – some 19kms out of town. Becky and I put in at the bridge and paddled downstream. We were warned by a group of young fishermen that the river petered out just around the corner. And sure enough it did. An outcrop of rock and boulders acted as a natural dam wall to hold the river back. So we turned back and headed upstream. This river had the similar white clay colour but had more life about it – both human and wildlife. After 5 kms the river narrowed and a few fallen trees made fisherman in aluminium punts more wary -so we had the river to ourselves in the most quintessential of Aussie outback scenes. Large gums with stark white bark precariously leaning over the waterway to form an archway of hon-

our. The temptation to dawdle and admire this natural environment was cut short by my daughter's reminder that the sun was getting lower and we had to get back to town to buy 'tea' for the family.

Days later found us at Longreach. After the obligatory visit to the Stockman's Hall of Fame, Beck and I were off to seek some paddlable waterway. A few kilometres out of town was the Thompson River and our first opportunity to paddle on water that eventually finishes at Lake Eyre in South Australia. We put in at a popular free camping spot for caravans and motor homes and headed upstream.

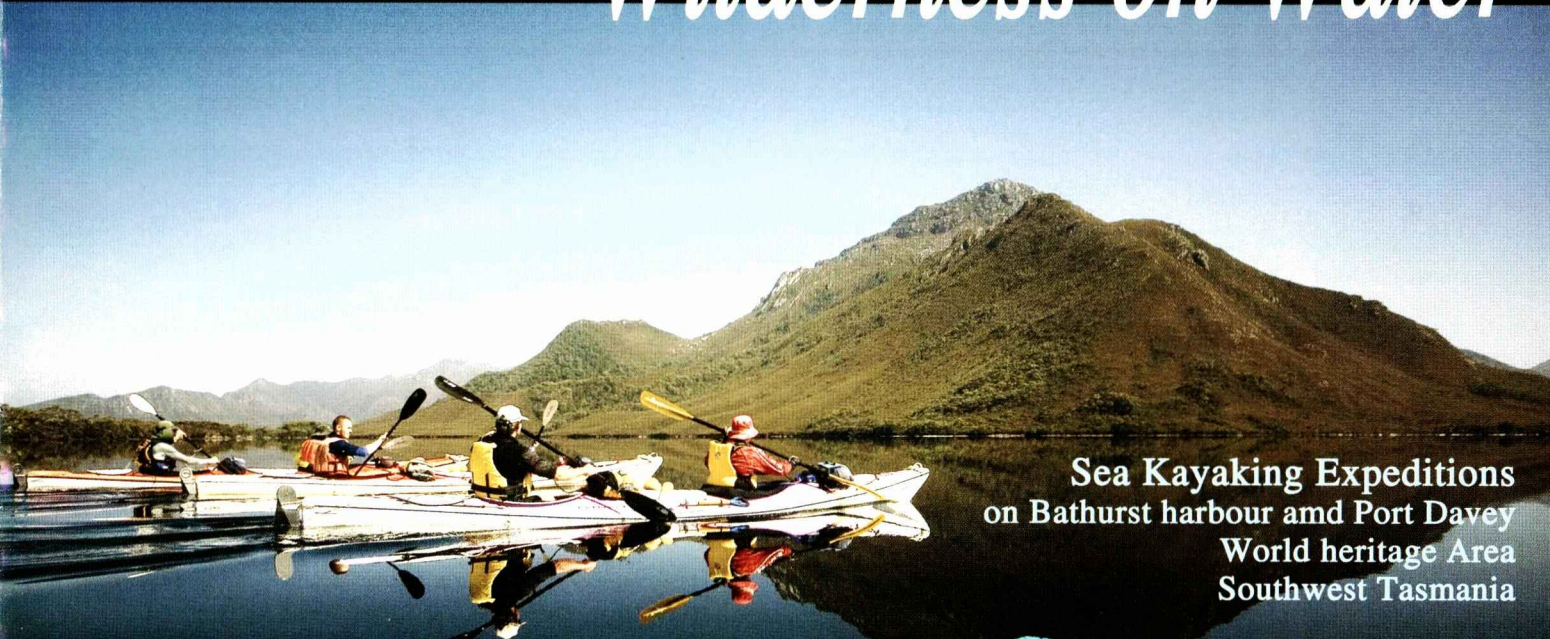
It was lovely stretch of water (I had been told a small weir banked the water up about 26 kilometres) and reasonably wide in parts. It was strange to see a paddle steamer (with a diesel motor) loaded with tourists making its way up the red coloured river. The Murray River it wasn't, however the red banks, the windmills and the

sparsely wooded banks with the occasional green patch, complete with kangaroos, made for a nature lovers dream.

Our travels continued north and into the gulf country. Many fellow travellers would recognise our outfit with the kayaks on top and ask where we had paddled last. Although as we pulled into Normanton, the more seasoned ones warned us about the perils of venturing into croc-infested waters.

I was nearly tempted at Point Karumba, where the Normanton River enters the Gulf of Carpentaria, and the fish are known to be plentiful along the mangrove-lined banks. That was until two elderly ladies asked how the fish were biting as we threw lines from the small beach. My positive answer was met with the reply, "That's good because there was a big croc on this beach early last night". Pack up the gear kids – we're out of here!

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PHOTO GALLERY





PHOTO: Rebecca Jennings. Polo Championships

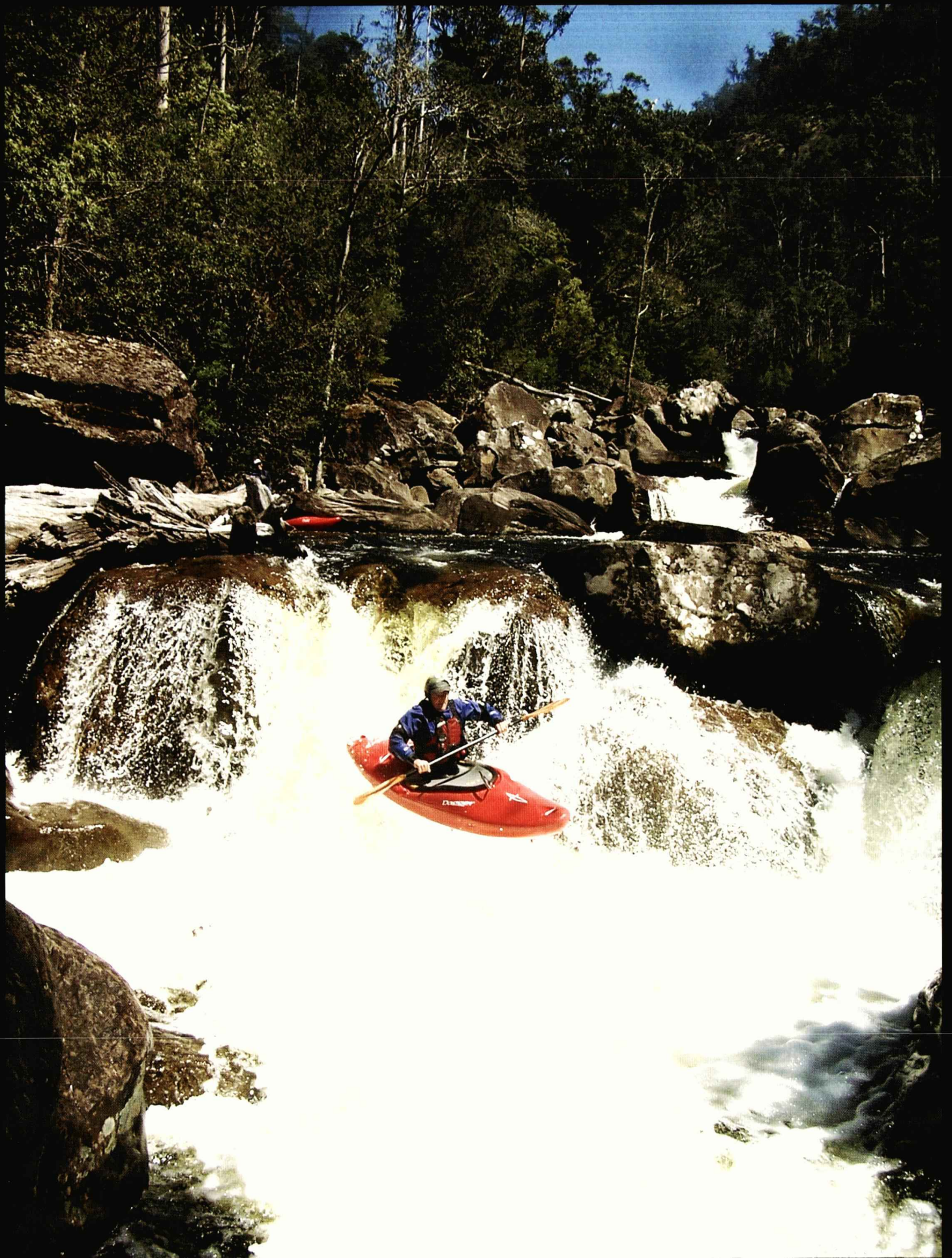




PHOTO: Colin Furmston: Broad River, Tasmania

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A close-up photograph of a fishing reel and a fish on a boat deck. The reel is a Daiwa 2500R, with the text '2500R' and 'DAIWA' visible on its side. The fish is a large, reddish-brown species, possibly a snapper, with a prominent eye. The background shows a green net and a white plastic container. The overall scene is set on a boat deck.

atch?



CANOEING

WHICH SPORT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

RECREATIONAL KAYAKING

In the last 10 years, plastic kayaks have evolved to the extent that almost anyone can simply hop in a kayak and paddle down the river. Kayak design has enabled recreational boats to be stable but still easy to manoeuvre. These kayaks are also easily adapted for those interested in kayak fishing.

As with open canoeing, this side of the sport is accessible to all, and particularly suited to families or those wanting to day trip. Most recreational kayaks don't have the space for the gear needed for multi-day excursions, but an overnight trip could be a possibility. This is also a great pastime for those with families.

RECREATIONAL CANOEING

Open Canoeing involves using an open boat, derived from the traditional craft of the indigenous peoples of North America, which is propelled with a single bladed paddle. This versatile craft can be used to carry equipment for expeditions; it can be poled in shallow water conditions and sailed like a sailing dinghy. An ideal craft for those who enjoy a peaceful day out exploring the river.

From early times remote groups of people have set about building craft to suit their particular needs, using whatever materials were available to them. The people who lived near forests had an abundant supply of logs and hollowed

them out to make boats. Subsequently, with time construction techniques were developed using planks of wood or frames covered with buffalo skins or birch bark and waterproofed with pitch.

SEA KAYAKING

Sea kayaking conjures up all kinds of wonderful images. And none of them can capture the experience of actually being out on the water in a solid boat with your spouse or a group of good friends at your side. A sea kayak is a wonderfully nimble and seaworthy craft capable of taking you places that larger boats wouldn't even attempt. Multi-day touring models can store enough food and other gear for extended voyages, while day touring models are better equipped for weekend excursions and day trips.

As with any backcountry activity, there are risks involved in sea kayaking. But don't let that scare you away from trying this wonderful sport. Training, preparation, good judgement and having the right equipment are the best weapons against a difficult situation on the water. If you train for every possible scenario, prepare by bringing the right equipment, and keep your head, then you should have a great time and return fresh and ready to go out on the water the next day.

As sea kayaks are generally a more stable type of kayak, this is an easy and fun area of canoeing for all ages. All you need is a love for the outdoors.

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CANOING

WHICH SPORT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

SLALOM CANOEING

In 2005 Slalom racing became more accessible to the general paddler. The International Canoe Federation decided to shorten the length of the slalom boat, making it easier to handle and more like those boats used in whitewater river running.

The rule change, also caused slalom courses to become steeper, with more dynamic moves and rewards for riskier and more spectacular moves.

The new class of slalom boats will still be built for speed, but they'll look and handle more like the current crop of plastic river runners. Prijon already has released the 10-foot-long Athlete, a plastic speedster based on an unrestricted slalom design. Eric Jackson, a slalom Olympian turned freestyle world champion and boat designer, envisions an initial shortening to the 10-foot range, followed by a generation of even smaller boats designed for the tighter courses. "People will see the benefits of getting good at slalom for their river-running skills." (Eric Jackson)

Slalom racing is great for those who want to improve their water handling skills, or for the control freak. The course set at each race, leads the paddlers through a series of gates set in the current and also in the eddies. However, it is generally not a team sport so its best suited to those with dedication and the ability to work on your own. For those

that want more team atmosphere, there is a C2 (double canoe) class and teams events at major races.

MARATHON RACING

Marathons are long distance races on rivers, lakes, estuaries or even open sea. The course may include obstacles such as shallows, rocks and portages. Under ICF rules, the minimum distances for international races are 20 km for men, and 15 km for women. The races may be divided in several parts and/or several days. World Cup and World Championship races normally are about 35 to 40 km long. As there are no maximum distances, marathon racing has its extremes, such as the Devizes to Westminster Marathon in England (125 miles, i.e. about 200 km), the Tour de Gudenå in Denmark (120 km), the Texas Water Safari (262 mi), the Weyerhaeuser Au Sable River Canoe Marathon (nonstop 120 miles), the Berg River Canoe Marathon in South Africa (248 km), the Red Cross Murray Marathon, 404km down the Murray River in Australia, and the longest annual canoe and kayak race, The Yukon River Quest (742km).

Marathon races are graded according to an individual paddlers ability and will start in a low division over a short distance of 2 miles working up to the longer 4 and 8 mile



aces

Marathon competition has been around for many years with the Royal Canoe Club running one of the oldest known races 'The Royal Paddling Challenge'. The format of marathon racing can be varied and may include knock-out events, team races, time trials and so forth, taking place on rivers, lakes, canals and the sea.

This form of sport is very popular, appealing to a wide range of people of all shapes, sizes, ages and abilities. The activity is in many ways similar to a marathon running race except that obviously they involve paddling on water testing both endurance and tactics.

FLATWATER RACING (SPRINT)

Flatwater racing takes place on a straight course divided in lanes, on calm water. The distances recognised by the ICF for international races are 200 m, 500 m, and 1000 m. Each boat has its own designated lane, except for races over more than 1000 m, where there also may be turning points. Men race in canoes and in kayaks, women only in kayaks except for in Canada, where women's canoe is an event raced at both Canada Games and National Championships. For each race a number of heats, semi-finals and a final may be necessary, depending on the number of competitors.

Flatwater racing has been part of the Olympic Games since 1936 (Berlin) for men, and since 1948 (London) for women. Notable Olympic gold medal winners are Birgit Fischer-Schmidt (8 gold medals since 1980) and Gert Fredriksson (6 gold medals between 1948 and 1960).

In European and World Championship competitions, C-4 races are also held, as well as the women's races in all classes. 200 m races are also held although not for juniors. The 2006 World Championships were held in Szeged, Hungary.

CANOE POLO

Canoe Polo is an exciting team event played on 30m x 20m pitches set up in swimming pools or on flat stretches of water. Teams of 5 paddlers endeavour to score goals in a net suspended 2m above the water, the ball being thrown by hand, or 'flicked' with the paddle. Naturally, the team with the most goals at the end of the match wins the game.

This is a great team sport, and perfect for those that also want to make it a social occasion. Polo is played at many levels. If you want to play on the social level its possible, however, if you want to become more serious, there are well co-ordinated teams in Australia striving to win medals at World Championships.

This sport is perfect for the paddler wanting exercise and adrenaline without the whitewater.



FREESTYLE CANOEING

Freestyle kayaking is one of the newest and most exciting canoeing disciplines. Similar to Freestyle Skiing, athletes perform tricks utilising the water to help manoeuvre themselves about. Like all new sports Freestyle now encompasses exciting aerial moves and it is not uncommon to see athletes propel themselves into the air and rotate their kayak the same as a gymnast would their body.

The competition is intense with all the spectators and judges attention focused on the one river feature. Each competitor has 45 seconds to complete as many moves on one given ride. The more complex the athlete's routine, the higher their score.

Inroads into the design of the boats utilised in Freestyle Canoeing, have meant an increased standard in moves/tricks created by competitors. Compared to standard river running kayaks, Freestyle kayaks have flat hulls and different volume displacement, which enables greater control. Freestyle kayaking is for anyone who doesn't mind getting their head wet. It's a great way to increase your existing skills and create new ones plus opens up new challenges on your favourite river run.

DRAGON BOAT RACING

Governed and promoted by the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF), dragon boat racing is a flat-water, sprint paddling sport, with a paddling style similar to those

in sprint canoe without the kneeling. Dragon Boat racers use single blade paddles, but the real challenge of dragon boat racing lies not in the paddling technique but rather in synchronizing with 19 other paddlers on the boat. The challenge is even greater for a mixed team of paddlers of different sizes and strength levels. Dragon boat races are typically 500 meters, but occasionally there are 250m, 1000m, 2000m and marathon races.

In North America, teams typically paddle at stroke rates of 60 to 85spm (stroke per minute). In Asia, top teams can pull water at stroke rates above 100spm. It is common for four or more teams in a race to finish close together and only split-second apart. Many competitive teams post times around 2.5 minutes to cover 500m while elite teams can cover the same course length in less than 2 minutes.

Originating in Southern China over 2000 years ago, dragon boat racing started gathering interest in the western world in the 1970s. Today, it is both a recreational and a highly competitive sport enjoyed by people of all ages in over 50 countries and territories around the world. Dragon boat racing is increasingly popular as a component in corporate team building retreats and charitable fundraising events, particularly for promoting breast cancer awareness. Outside China, people in various parts of Asia also have long traditions of paddling boats that are similar to the Chinese dragon boats. In Korea, dragon boating has

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“winning isn't everything. But wanting to win is.”

Vince Lombardi

CANOING

WHICH SPORT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

been an integral part of the Korean culture for more than 1000 years. In Thailand, swan boat racing is as important to the Thais as dragon boat racing to the Chinese. In Vietnam, Ba Trao rowing originated from an ancient ritual of worshipping the whale god (Ong), the river god and earth god, combined with prayers for peace, happiness and full harvest. In Okinawa, Japan, the Naha Hari has been a tradition for fishermen to pray for fair weather and good fishing since the 14th century. In Kerala of southern India, annual snake boat races are held during the Onam Festival to reenact various Indian legends that involve using a fleet of snake boats to carry elaborate offerings to the Sree Krishna Temple. A giant snake boat can carry as many as 100 paddlers.

OUTRIGGER RACING

Outrigger canoe paddling has its origins in the development and spread of the coastal culture of the Pacific rim region about 30,000 years ago, with canoes playing an integral role in the survival and transmigration of ancient cultures. It was many thousands of years before outrigger canoe racing became a competitive sport and maritime advancement saw the canoe evolve to the sleek racing boats of today. The first canoe race, initially for men, was in the Hawaiian Islands in Waikiki in 1917.

Outrigger canoe racing is a relatively young sport in Australia. Seventy years after Hawaii's first Outrigger Canoe Club was formed, the first club in Australia was formed in 1978 on the Gold Coast. Racing takes on two forms, marathons and sprints, both in six person canoes (OC6) and solo canoes (OC1). Sprint races are held over 500 - 3000 metres, whilst marathon races vary in distance between 5 and 30 kilometres. For races over 30 kms, the six person teams are allowed to have 9 crew with any 3 alternating by way of changeovers. This is where paddlers fall out of the canoe and are replaced by waiting paddlers in the water who grab the side of the canoe and pull themselves into the craft to commence paddling. In the so called "off season", the "Wai Puhī" racing series is held in each Zone, whereby solo (OC1) paddlers compete in open ocean long course marathons like the challenging 42km Hamilton Cup held in the beautiful Whitsundays, and the 48km Gold Coast Cup between Coolangatta and Southport. This is a great sport for anyone wanting to foster friendships, health and fitness.

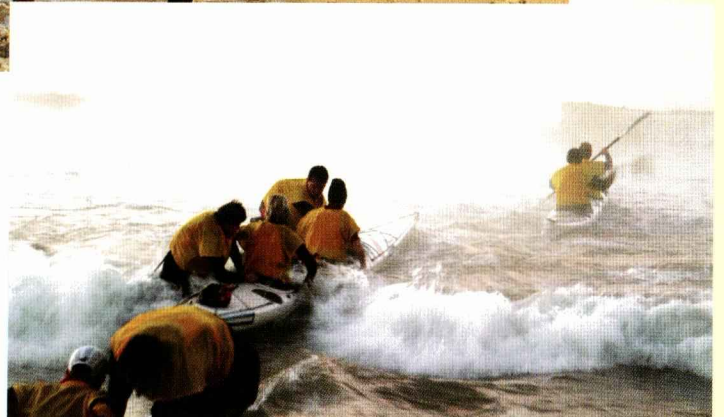
ADVENTURE RACING

For some people getting started in Adventure Racing can seem pretty intimidating. The first decision is what

race will be your first race. You should initially choose a one day race that is shorter than 12 hours. If you are having a hard time finding a teammate, choose a race that allows for solo racers. But if it is possible to find a teammate, race as a team. Racing with an experienced teammate is the fastest way to gain valuable knowledge and experience. And racing with someone else, regardless of their experience, is usually more fun and safer.

Once you have chosen a race, you need to start to prepare for it physically. Find out what disciplines will be used in the race and start training in those skills. If the race is going to be running/trekking, mountain biking, kayaking and navigation, train in those areas. If there is a discipline that you are not familiar with get some help and learn the proper techniques and work at becoming proficient. Adventure Racing is about all the disciplines involved, not just kayaking. You will need to spend a proportionate amount of time training for each discipline, according to the length of time you will be racing each leg.

Adventure Racing is perfect for the training and gear freak, and those who want to focus on more than one sport. Just remember, to have fun training and racing. Laugh and don't take yourself too seriously. The adventure racing community is still a small tight knit group and most racers are happy to help out someone new to the sport in whatever way they can.



Calendar

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Canoe Polo Summer Series Round 2 | 1-Dec-07 | New South Wales Canoeing Inc |
| Victorian Wildwater Championships | 1-Dec-07 | WW Committee |
| Victorian Canoe Slalom Championships | 1-Dec-07 | Canoeing Victoria |
| Canoe Polo Finals | 1-Dec-07 | Canoe SA |
| Victor Harbour Sea Paddle | 2-Dec-07 | Christina Jarvis |
| DCC Champs / Wildwater Selection Race 1 | 2-Dec-07 | Derwent Canoe Club |
| Wildwater Selection Race 2 | 5-Dec-07 | Canoe Tasmania |
| Wildwater Selection Race 3 | 7-Dec-07 | Canoe Tasmania |
| Tasmanian Wildwater Championships | 8-Dec-07 | Canoe Tasmania |
| Tasmanian Canoe Slalom Championships - Southern Cup 1 | 8-Dec-07 | Canoe Tasmania |
| Canoe SA Sprint Regatta three | 8-Dec-07 | Canoe South Australia |
| Vic Flat Schools Championships | 8-Dec-07 | Flatwater T C |
| World Cup Paddle Weekend - Fremantle to Sorrento | 9-Dec-07 | Ascot Kayak Club |
| 2007 Ocean Ski Series | 15-Dec-07 | Ocean Series |
| Junior Selection Races - NZ - Southern Cup 3 and \$ | 15-Dec-07 | NZ Whitewater |
| Canoe Polo Beginners Course | 11-Jan-08 | Perth Canoe Polo Club |
| Southern Cup 4 and 5 - Slalom Championships | 12-Jan-08 | Canoes Plus Racing Team |
| Level 1 Slalom Coaching Course | 12-Jan-08 | Penrith Valley Canoeing |
| NSW 200M SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIPS 2008 | 18-Jan-08 | NSWCI - Direct Members |
| Canoe SA Sprint Regatta Four | 19-Jan-08 | Canoe South Australia |
| 2007 Aust Schools and 2008 Nationals Slalom Championships | 20-Jan-08 | Australian Canoeing |
| 2008 Australia Day Canoe Polo Competition | 26-Jan-08 | Northern Districts Canoe Club |
| Vic Marathon Grand Prix 1 | 26-Jan-08 | Deniliquin Canoe Club |
| Canoe Polo Summer Series Round 3 | 26-Jan-08 | Northern Districts Canoe Club |
| Qld Flatwater Championships | 26-Jan-08 | Queensland Canoeing |
| Australian Open Slalom Championships | 26-Jan-08 | AC |
| Vic Marathon Grand Prix 2 | 27-Jan-08 | Yarrowonga Mulwala Canoeing Club |
| 2008 Australian Senior Slalom Team Nomination | 31-Jan-08 | Australian Canoeing |
| Canoe SA Sprint Regatta Five | 3-Feb-08 | Canoe South Australia |
| Vic Marathon Grand Prix 3 | 3-Feb-08 | Footscray Amateur Canoe Club |
| NSW SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIPS 2008 | 9-Feb-08 | NSWCI - Direct Members |
| Australian Junior Slalom Team Selection Race 3 & 4 | 16-Feb-08 | Canoeing Victoria |
| Vic Flat - Regatta 3 | 17-Feb-08 | Flatwater T C |
| Grand Prix Sprint Regatta two | 22-Feb-08 | Australian Canoeing |
| Victorian Canoe Polo Invitational | 23-Feb-08 | VCP |
| Victor Harbour Sea Paddle | 24-Feb-08 | Christina Jarvis |
| Marathon Series #1 - Maroochy Marathon | 24-Feb-08 | Sunshine Coast Canoe Club |
| Vic Flatwater Championships | 1-Mar-08 | Flatwater T C |
| 2008 MARS petcare Multisport Challenge | 1-Mar-08 | Mitta Mitta Canoe Club |
| 2008 National & Oceania Continental Flatwater Championships | 12-Mar-08 | Oceania Federation |
| Canoe SA National Sprint Titles | 12-Mar-08 | Canoe South Australia |
| 2008 Oceania Continental Slalom Championships | 15-Mar-08 | Oceania Federation |
| Australian Senior Slalom Team Selection Race 1 & 2 | 15-Mar-08 | Oceania Federation |
| Victorian Canoe Polo Invitational Competition | 15-Mar-08 | Canoeing Victoria |
| 2008 Australian Marathon Canoe Championships | 21-Mar-08 | New South Wales Canoeing Inc |
| Australian Senior Slalom Team Selection Race 3 & 4 | 21-Mar-08 | AC |
| Australian Canoe Polo Championships | 21-Mar-08 | AC |
| 2008 Australian Marathon Canoe Championships | 21-Mar-08 | NSW Canoeing & ACMRTC |



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