

Dragons Abreast Sydney

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL DAS PADDLERS
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Our Biggest Newbies Yet!

Didn't a great bunch of Newbies show up to our lovely sunny Open Day in September? Judging from the shining faces as they clambered out of the boats and from their emails the magic of paddling with DASydney shone through and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves. This is what one of the survivors, Deb Hirst, had to say about it:

I had such a great morning.

I absolutely loved paddling!!!! The atmosphere was great, so positive and invigorating and a chance for me to try something completely different. I was in boat 4 and had the best time, I was in the second row behind "Deb" and the mum of the person who told us about technique etc (sorry cannot remember her name). At the front of the boat was a woman called Kris who was a fabulous motivator and our sweep was Akal.

Anyway it was fab so can I come next Saturday at 7.45am? I am 99.9 % sure that I am hooked regards and thanks again to you and all your terrific members who made yesterday possible.

Deb Hirst

PS Deborah (ed: Read) who was the "main motivator" was lots of fun

Anne Steng, Sally Oh, Rosie O'Donnell, Elaine Burrow, Deb Story and Deb Hirst became instant dragon boat tragics and have already signed up as members so please make them very welcome!

The post-paddle stampede to refuel



Milling around in the parking lot at registration time



Tickets to Ryde

For the first regatta of the new season DASydney fielded a boatload of keen paddlers (some experienced, some virgin regatta paddlers) who acquitted themselves splendidly. Congratulations must go to a gutsy Helen Westwood (she of the shiny, new, raffle-prize bicycle last month) as it was the first time she'd stroked (ie paddled in the first row) at a regatta. This was what she had to say about the experience:

The Ryde Regatta was something I was really looking forward to – it had been nearly six months since DASydney had last participated in a regatta and I had been in a race. My excitement turned to terror on learning that I'd been 'volunteered' to stroke the race with Eugenia who had just returned from the world championships and had been training four times a week. True I had been stroking during some of our winter sessions however by no stretch of the imagination could I be described as a graceful paddler who has a

faultless technique. But I could keep time and as this is the main role of the stoker I thought what the hell I'll give it a go and take up the challenge!

Sunday the 18th was a gorgeous spring morning with enough of a breeze to give the water that choppy edge. We all arrived at Bennelong Park at around the same time and I received lots of good wishes and reassurance from those who knew I was suffering from self doubts. As the first race approached we warmed up and looking around I took note of the great variations in experience of the paddlers in our crew. From the very talented and race-fit women who had just returned from the world championships in Berlin to those of us who had been paddling during winter once a week to those who had paddled just two or three times.

The first race was the most difficult. I allowed my nerves to unsettle me and didn't keep my eye on Eugenia's time so I was out of time by the end of the race, but only at the very end. We were the only all female crew and

came second in our first race just being overtaken at the very end of the race by a crew that was majority male. I learnt by my mistake and in the next race I focused completely on Eugenia's timing and did not look ahead this also was not the best stroking technique. We were the only all female crew in this race also and again came second. By our final race I believe I got the balance right between looking ahead, twisting and watching Eugenia's time in my peripheral vision. At the end of this race I felt that I had stroked as well as I could, given my level of fitness and experience. This race we won against mixed crews. Of course there's lots of room for improvement in my stroking technique and I received lots of coaching tips from my fellow paddlers which helped me analyse what it was I was doing wrong and where I had got it right. Our crew did very well winning the 'B' final.

It was great to again experience the camaraderie, thrill and sense of euphoria you get from dragon boat racing – I'm hanging out for the next regatta on 9th October.

Queer as Folk

That has to describe my efforts at Folk Art when I tried to paint a little drink coaster with a couple of strawberries. Being artistically challenged, I'm not so sure I'll trot this little number out when I have guests, but I'll definitely use it in private on my desk as a memento of a fun day with the DASydney Craft Group. Margot Case was our expert Folk Art Coach and she produced a bewildering array of paintbrushes, paints and other paraphernalia along with blank coasters ready for us to decorate.

Our first task was to paint perfect practice commas (one of the basic brush strokes) on a dummy sheet of paper. Calligraphy experts, Jo and Jenny Petterson, naturally excelled instantly producing rows of perfect commas and then inexplicably turned groups of them into beautiful fern fronds and curlicues. How depressing! Commas sound simple enough, but those darned paintbrushes sure made some weird commas on my bit of paper, so I wasn't too optimistic about starting on the coaster. Resigned to the fact that I'd never make elegant leaves out of commas, I dodged the flower option and figured turning red blobs into simple strawberries would present fewer flourishes for me to mess up. Margo-Lynne created a lovely design with bluebells in a flurry of snowflakes while Robin Shoebridge went with a daisy and Jenny Petterson produced an awesome bunch of grapes, complete with delicate leaves and tendrils. Jo Petterson executed a dramatically elegant design of graceful swirls in graduated beiges and gold.



It was all good fun once we got going, and I promise I won't make any more folk art coasters and inflict them on anyone as presents.

Arty folk: Nancy Sage, Robin Shoebridge, Margo-Lynne Lee, Joanne Petterson, Margot Case, me, Karen Sykes (Jenny Petterson took the picture)

Scrapbooking Again

Well, it was such a hit last time that we leant on our scrapbooking virtuoso, Robin Shoebridge, to do it again. Contact Robin (details in calendar) to reserve your place for Friday 28th October – she'll have a kit all ready for you to make something surprisingly clever!



Left: Wilma Kippers, Brenda Owen, Cynthia Kuiper, Jenny and Joanne Petterson, Geoff Eldridge, Margaret Puddick and friends – at the start.

Below: Some grabbed the opportunity to sit when we came in sight of the Heads.

Bottom: checking out the aboriginal carvings and the views

DASydney Spit to Manly Walk

Eat your hearts out if you missed this one – Wilma Kippers organised a fantastic hike for around 15 of us, starting at The Spit with maps in hand and walking the 7km to Manly.

We crossed the Spit Bridge and then the path took us through some sub-tropical rain-forest around Fisher Bay. We were able to show Claire, the British backpacker in our group, an Australian historical site – an aboriginal shell midden – not quite Stonehenge, but the best we could manage.

From there we skirted Sandy Bay and the beach at Clontarf before clambering up the Castle Rock track to the higher heathland and red gum forest. From various vantage points we could look across to the Quarantine Station and Little Manly Cove. We also saw the shacks on the cliffs above Crater Cove, built in the 1920s and occupied for the next 60 years until the residents were turfed out by the Parks and Wildlife people. By this time the path sloped gently downhill all the way to Manly, so the most energetic bit was behind us already.

It was a lovely calm, overcast day, perfect for walking and enjoying the spectacular vistas of the harbour, as well as aboriginal (and WWII) rock carvings of fish, boomerangs and kangaroos. Some of the wildflowers were blooming and along the wooded bits of the path we came across a few lovely thickets of furry flannel flowers.

The chatter along the way was happy and pretty well continuous throughout as we meandered on past Forty Baskets Beach, and Fairlight. Once we reached Manly the big decisions of the day had to be made – was it to be fish and chips for lunch, doner kebabs or salads, hamburgers etc? I think everyone had something different as we picnicked on the grass watching the surf school on the beach.

Many thanks to Wilma and Martin for organising such a happy expedition.



Wanted: Someone Snappy

It's so much more fun when our little newsletter has lots of photos – and sometimes, with a bit of effort, we are able to track down some beauties. However, we would just love someone with an itchy trigger finger to volunteer to be our newsletter photographer at different social and paddling events. I'm sure there are lots of talented paddlers with digital cameras so having a few of you at the ready would hopefully help us cover the different functions/events. Please can you contact me on cynthiakuiper@yahoo.com to talk about it.

Ladies Who Lunch in Breast Cancer Month

Don't miss our DASydney lunch at "The Little Snail" restaurant in Pyrmont on Sunday 23rd October. It promises to be delicious (well it was last time we went there!) and what could be more fun than sharing a meal with a (rowdy?) bunch of your fellow paddlers? To join in you will need to book with our Social Events Coordinator, Margo-Lynne Lee – see contact details in the calendar. This is not a fundraiser, so it only costs what the restaurant charges.

Christmas is Coming

Before your calendar fills up, set aside Saturday November 19th for the big DASydney Christmas Party at Eugenia Raftos' place. It's no charge, just bring a plate – Eugenia will coordinate who brings what and be prepared to feast! If any of you party people would like to contribute with activities or ideas to make it more fun, please contact Margo-Lynne Lee, our Social Events Coordinator ASAP.

Sending Rainbows and Blowing Candles

Our very warmest wishes go to Deb Read this month – she's bravely hanging in there through her chemo and we hope she's smart enough to ask for a hand with whatever seems too hard. Looking forward to seeing you on deck again soon, Deb.

Birthday wishes this month go to candle blowers Di Millgate on 6th October and Kris Sawyer on 7th October. Hope you both have fun and a great year ahead.

Don't forget to let us know soon if you want to paddle at the Mavericks' Connells Point Regatta.

Paddles Up!
Cynth...

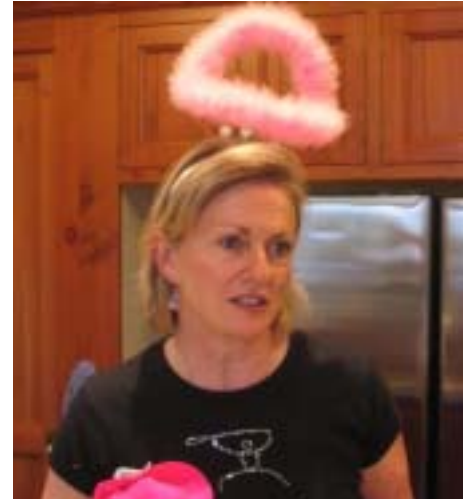
Vancouver Reunion

Brenda and David Owen recently hosted a reunion for DAS paddlers who travelled to Canada in July for the 10 Year Anniversary Celebrations of the founding of breast cancer survivor paddling.

Right: Reunion hostess Brenda Owen

Below: Geoff Eldridge, Jenny Petterson, Deb Read, Jo Petterson and David

Bottom: Reunion buddies Pam Bell and Robin Shoebridge.



DASydney Guidelines for Paddle Sessions and Regattas

DASydney Team Categories

As a club, DASydney now has the capacity to enter teams in competitions as DASydney or as a sporting team.

- The DASydney team/s will compete under the DASydney logo and adhere to DAA rules.
- The sporting team/s (the name of which is yet to be determined), will not use the DASydney name or the DASydney uniform, and will not need to adhere to DAA rules. It will of course need to abide by DBNSW rules.

If a DASydney team and a sporting team are competing at the same regatta, paddlers can only paddle for ONE team on the day. That is, they cannot be included on the team member list for a DASydney crew and a sporting crew on the same day.

It is envisaged that members of the sporting team/s will be competitive paddlers who are prepared to commit to serious and arduous training programs. Membership of the sporting team/s will be via a competitive selection process. Paddlers aiming for sporting team membership will be required to undertake a two minute erg trial, the weight-adjusted results of which, along with the DASydney team captain and coach recommendations and, where possible, video replay analysis, will rank paddlers and determine seating positions. If numbers warrant, a second sporting team will be established.

Erg trials will be available at regular intervals (probably every 6 – 8 weeks) and before major events. The results of these trials could necessitate changes to the membership and composition of the sporting team/s.

All DASydney club members will have the opportunity to participate in erg testing. Erg testing is ENTIRELY OPTIONAL and only designed for those who wish to extend themselves.

Paddling Sessions

DASydney will continue to book boats for Thursday night and Saturday morning. The number of boats utilised will depend on paddler numbers and sweep availability, and given these and other variables, changes to routine might occur. Flexibility to alter the session format, training programs and the composition of the boats according to need, is important.

Saturday mornings

The Saturday morning session will cater for the full range of paddler levels within

DASydney. For the majority of the time the sporting team will train separately to other crews, however, on the last Saturday of each month, wherever practical, paddlers will train together in mixed boats.

If feasible, on Thursday nights and Saturday mornings prior to regattas or major events, paddlers will be asked to train as a team.

Thursday nights

Whilst the paddle session on Thursday night will be designed primarily to meet the training needs of a DASydney sporting team, any interested paddlers are welcome to attend.

For both sessions, paddlers will be expected to confirm their attendance by email/telephone several days prior to each paddling session so that sweeps, coaches and boat crews can be organised and delay minimised.

National Club Crew Championships

The National Club Crew Championships will be held at Nagambie Lakes, Victoria in Easter, 2006. It is anticipated that DASydney will enter as a Dragons Abreast team/s and as a sporting team. The National Championships is a fantastic event and all club members are welcome to compete.

The sporting team/s entered by DASydney for this event will be determined on the basis of erg trials, team captain and coach recommendations and, where possible, video replay analysis. Selection will probably occur early February, immediately after Chinese New Year. Selected sports paddlers will need to commit to up to 3 water training sessions per week as well as a weights program and aerobic sessions.

Members paddling in the DASydney team/s for this event will also be expected to take part in a dedicated training program.

Regattas and the 80/20 Rule

With so many new people in the club and regattas starting up for the season, it is timely to reiterate the parameters under which we participate in these regattas. In particular there are some Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA) rules which govern supporter participation in regattas. These aim to prevent misrepresentation of our teams with regard to their survivor status and are known as "the 80/20 rule". All supporters should read and understand this rule before deciding to join any Dragons Abreast club.

As Dragons Abreast paddlers at regattas

we must all conform not only to the race rules set out by the state and national dragon boat sporting bodies (ie DBNSW and AUSDBF) but also to the rules of our own national organisation, DAA. All members should familiarise themselves with the rules of racing imposed by these organisations.

The DAA rulings affecting DASydney paddlers at regattas aim to ensure that crews which purport in any way to be Dragons Abreast crews are in fact predominantly crewed by breast cancer survivors (BCS) and thus not misrepresenting our cause.

Any crew racing as a Dragons Abreast crew (ie using the words "Dragons Abreast", "DA" or implying breast cancer by wearing pink) must have a minimum of 80% survivors (BCS) in the crew. Furthermore, in crew selection survivors (ie people who have had breast cancer) take priority over other cancers (O), which take priority over supporters (S). That means that a non-survivor (O or S) cannot take the place of a survivor (BCS) who wants to paddle in that race. If a number of Dragons Abreast crews are being fielded and all survivors are given places in crews in that race, then supporters may be admitted to a crew under the 80/20 rule.

DASydney is a CLUB and we are able to have many different teams under our umbrella. This includes sporting crews for which DAA constraints do not apply. These DASydney sporting crews must race under a different name and wear a different uniform so as not to imply they are crewed by survivors. However, it is also possible for a sporting crew to be made up of survivors and in that case they can wear the Pink. Most commonly the DAS sporting crews would currently be made up of any mix of BCS, O and S paddlers and, as with any competitive team, will generally be chosen through competitive selection.

Composite Boats at Regattas

It's a fact of life that we never have exact multiples of 20 paddlers sign up for regattas – so obviously we need to make overflow arrangements at most regattas. In Dragons Abreast we are lucky that we are frequently able to team up with paddlers from other DA clubs to make up composite DA crews. It's a brilliant solution not open to regular sporting dragon boat clubs and it ensures that everyone gets to paddle, not just the 20 that fit in a particular boat on the day. All paddlers should be aware that they will often paddle in composite crews and it's a great way of meeting girls from other DA clubs. So enjoy!

DAS CALENDAR 2005.2006.2007

Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
October 2005			
Fri 7th – Sun 16th	10th Australian Masters Games	Adelaide	Contact Angela Aston for more details on angela@nswcc.org.au
Sun 9th	Mavericks Regatta	Connells Point	Register with DASydney Team Captain, Anne Gates on jabberwocky@myaccess.com.au
Sun 23rd	DASydney Breast Cancer Month Lunch	Little Snail, Pyrmont	Everyone welcome – for bookings contact DASydney Social Events Coordinator Margo-Lynne Lee on shortsandie@hotmail.com
Fri 28th	DASydney Craft Day - Scrapbooking	Engadine	Scrapbooking was so popular we're doing it again. Contact Robin Shoebridge on rsho3799@bigpond.net.au to reserve your seat.
Sat 29th	Relay for Life	Blacktown	Volunteers wanted to join Zonta stall to promote Dragons Abreast. Contact Cynthia on cynthiagkuiper@yahoo.com
November 2005			
Sat 5th	DASydney Newbies Day	Pyrmont	By reservation only!! – contact Cynthia Kuiper on cynthiagkuiper@yahoo.com
Sun 6th	Regatta	TBA	
Sat 12th	NSW Breast Cancer Institute Public Forum 2005	Westmead Hospital	12.30 – 3.10pm Free. Details www.bci.org.au . Register 9265 0700 or online www.tourhosts.com.au/bcipublicforum
Sat 19th	DASydney Xmas Party	Roseberry	Contact Eugenia Raftos on phillipraftos@optusnet.com.au for details
Sat 26th	National DB Officials Course	DBNSW, Homebush	10am – 4pm
December 2005			
Sun 4th	Sloths Regatta	Penrith SIRC	Register with DASydney Team Captain, Anne Gates on jabberwocky@myaccess.com.au
Sat 10th	DBNSW Level 1 Dragon Boat Coaching Course	DBNSW, Homebush	By arrangement only.
January 2006			
Sat 14th	Regatta	TBA	
February 2006			
W/E 11th /12th	Chinese New Year Dragon Boat Festival	Darling Harbour	You MUST put this in your diary now!!!
Saturday 11th	Chinese New Year Banquet	Regal Restaurant, Chinatown	This will be huuuuuge! Book now! Contact DASydney Social Events Coordinator Margo-Lynne Lee for booking details on shortsandie@hotmail.com .
Wed 15th	Hornsby Zonta	Hornsby	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
March 2006			
Sat 25th	2006 NSW State Dragon Boat Titles	Penrith, SIRC	
April 2006			
Fri 14th – Sun 16th (Easter Weekend)	2006 AusDBF National Dragon Boat Titles	Nagambie Lakes, Victoria	For accommodation, contact: Nagambie Lakes Visitor Centre ph: 03 5794 2647 www.nagambielakestourism.com.au
August 2006			
11th – 13th	World Club Crew Championships	Toronto, Canada	
September 2007			
20th – 23rd	World Dragon Boat Championships	Penrith SIRC	We'll need lots of competitors and lots of volunteers
28th - 31st	Internationally Abreast Festival	Kawana Lakes, Sunshine Coast, Qld	Small place – not too soon to book accommodation now