



Dragons Abreast Sydney
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Paddling in style at the States

The State Titles held at the Regatta Centre at Penrith are always a great day out for DA Sydney members and this year was no exception. The predicted showers didn't materialise until late in the afternoon so, apart from the 1000m race, we enjoyed a full day of paddling and managed to pick up some bling as well.

All that training with the state team paid off with the DASzlers A team picking up the bronze medals and a handsome trophy in the Womens Masters Category.

DASzlers B gave an amazing performance with only 16 in the boat, including some novice racers. While not making the final, we exceeded our wildest expectations and I suspect we now have a few more paddle tragics in the making. The 500m course was a real test for some of the "virgin paddlers" but they all came through with flying colours – and mostly in time! Congratulations Jane Trew, Ruth Turnell and Faye Capes and we look forward to seeing you at future regattas.



All the happy paddlers at Penrith.



Susie Ingram collected the "bling" for the DASzlers A team.



We were all delighted to see Margaret Cantwell at Penrith.



Sue McClelland and Brenda Owen about to sample Jo Jeffcoat's "coffee cup" cakes.

Our "Sunbeams" – the Mixed Masters Team – put up their usual strong performance, this time with seven men in the boat – we'll get to that magic number 10 yet.

As always, there was plenty of food and chat during the day, including some truly wonderful cakes from Jo Jeffcoat in the shape of coffee cups

Put it in your diary now!

Sunday, 4th May
 End of Season Picnic
 Federal Park, Annandale

Sunday, 19th October
 Dragons Abreast National
 Corporate Regatta,
 Darling Harbour

A fantastic regatta like Chinese New Year, and including the Hospital Challenge, but hosted by DAA as an awareness and fundraising event in Breast Cancer Month. What an incredible first for Dragons Abreast!

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Winter Saturday paddling time starts April 12: be there at 8.00am and on the water by 8.30am

and the usual favourite – the Millgate fruit cake. The food served at regattas and other DASydney events has become so legendary that there is a plan to produce a recipe book later in the year, so start collecting those easy-to-prepare but delicious recipes to share with others.

This regatta also served as a farewell to long-time paddler and club stalwart Jo Fizell who, with her husband Norm, is doing the seachange thing and moving to the Gold Coast. Jo joined Dragons Abreast Sydney in September 2004 and has represented the club at numerous regattas, including her first one at Roseville in 2004 when she paddled in a composite team with ACCA. As well as being the paddler registrar for Tuesday nights, Jo organised the DA Sydney team that travelled to the Australian Masters Games in Adelaide in 2006. She assures us she will be paddling again soon and we are looking forward to catching up with her at the Pan Pacs in November.

It's not often we get to celebrate a wedding in our club so Di Millgate organised a surprise presentation to Yolande Franklin, who is fast approaching married bliss with Kevin. With contributions from club members, Yolande and Kevin will be enjoying a weekend at the Myall Lakes Eco Resort.

Thanks to team captain Di Williams and the team organisers for the regatta, Fairlie Stanish and Vicki McLean, for another great day of paddling and fun.

Best of luck to all those travelling to Perth for the Nationals.

And don't forget, competing at regattas is not just for the paddle tragics - it's exciting, exhilarating and fun for everyone!

More Photos

Click on the link below to see more photos from the State Titles at Penrith
<http://picasaweb.google.com/KerryEnemark>



DASzlers B – what we lacked in numbers, we made up for in enthusiasm and determination.



The Mixed Masters team gave another strong performance



Many of the paddlers from DASzlers A are off to compete at the Nationals in Perth



Jo Fizell is heading north.



Bride-to-be Yolande Franklin was bubbling with happiness.



**Don't panic, I'm here!
 Pam Bell arrives for the pre-race warm-up.**

Coordinator's Corner

On 3 March 2008 Dragons Abreast Sydney held its first general meeting, open to all members, at the DBNSW office in Homebush. This was a very popular choice of venue as, besides being a



Wilma Kippers

great space with good parking, "it was lovely being in an environment which celebrates dragon boating" and it "feels like our spiritual home", as one participant put it.

The general meeting was held to give members an opportunity to find out how our club is run and how we fit into a broader picture with our relationships to Dragons Abreast Australia, DBNSW and the national and international dragon boat federations. Also, the committee wanted members to have a chance to ask questions and comment on the running of Dragons Abreast Sydney.

Some 37 members participated in the meeting, and we were very pleased that Margaret Cantwell was able to attend. The feedback has been very positive with members feeling they are better informed about the club and what it takes to make everything happen.

To recap, besides paddling and everything associated with it, we are also involved in social events, fundraising activities, merchandising and, most importantly, as part of the Dragons Abreast Australia network, raising awareness of LIFE after breast cancer.

Following the success of this first meeting, we are aiming to hold two general meetings each year. I strongly urge all members to participate and become involved in the general business of our club.

Newbies training – The \$64 million Question

When is a Newbie not a Newbie? Brenda Owen explains the thinking behind our Newbies Training program.

As our membership approaches 100 we are, more than ever, aware of the issues that arise from the diverse range of paddling skills and personal expectations within our group.

This year the committee, and in particular the coaches, have been diligent in devising training programs to accommodate our disparate paddling skills and, in the process, hope that all our personal expectations are met, if not exceeded.

This is evident from the fact that we currently have Tuesdays for State Squad (i.e. serious training), Thursday for A, B and C paddlers wanting a greater workout, and on Saturday – tutti!

Overlaying this, we have four intakes of new paddlers per year. We value our most affectionately dubbed 'Newbies' very highly – after all, each of us have been there and Newbie status is to be revered. It is vital that we all assist our newer paddlers in their paddling journey.

We hope that all those who have already experienced, and those who are yet to experience their first 'paddle wetting', will go on to become members of our wonderful DASydney club and DAA. In order to do so, we ask for their commitment. We now ask them to attend at least three contiguous paddle training sessions during the ensuing five weeks. For some, this is a big ask.

In return, we have devised a five-week training program to ensure that everyone joining DASydney and DAA understands all aspects of boat safety, sweep calls, paddling technique, boat protocol, racing and training expectations.

Most people learn best by example, therefore more experienced paddlers are encouraged, expected, recruited to paddle with the Newbies training program.

Jokes aside, I want to impress on everyone that it is a privilege to paddle in our Newbies training program. Everyone's a winner – Newbies are inspired by example and Wannnabies get to correct/adjust/demonstrate their paddle prowess in a challenging, controlled and rewarding environment.

Our coordinator has often said that there is nothing quite like having a boat full of Newbies watching you to make you stop and consider your technique and evaluate just how well you are paddling. It is a great opportunity for self-evaluation and improvement.

This then, begs the \$64 million question: When is a Newbie no longer a Newbie? Some think:

- After the 5 week training program
- After the next Newbie's Day
- When you have committed to your own paddle
- When you can do an entire training session without pulling in your paddle
- When you have raced at your first regatta. (I do like this one)
- When membership fees are paid
- When you can comfortably paddle on Thursdays without suffering on Fridays
- Perhaps all of the above (which would probably exclude just about all of us).

However, the reality is that learning to paddle, like life, is a continuum. There is no defining moment at which point we metamorphose. We all continue to learn and each time we go out on the water is a learning experience. From time to time, we each wake up and realise that we have ironed out yet another little wrinkle in our paddling technique (not that technique is everything) and we will feel a rewarding sense of achievement.

I guess the message to us all is this – whatever you think about your paddling prowess, remember we are a very special and complex group.

Primarily, Dragons Abreast is about spreading the 'Breast Cancer Awareness' message but we are also very much about:

- Paddling
- Inclusiveness
- Having a great time with friends
- Getting fit
- Regaining active lives after breast cancer treatment
- Feeling good about our achievements
- Providing hope for others living with a diagnosis
- Plus a raft of very personal reasons.

So, see you all on the water very soon and hopefully in a training boat.

Paddles Up!

A timely reminder

As a result of Chinese New Year, we have had a lot of publicity lately, which is wonderful.

While publicity is great, privacy is vital.

If you are approached by ANY member of the press, requesting 'suitable stories', please be aware that our club membership information is private. If you think that Dragons Abreast may be able to assist with a story, please take the journalist's name and contact phone number and tell them that our coordinator or PR person will contact them.

Please do not give out details like circumstances or names (not even first names as there are many stories on the DAA site and journalists can google and search just like the rest of us).

Getting ready to paddle



Ever wondered why we spend so much time warming-up before we paddle. Team captain Di Williams explains.

Before you begin to exercise it is very important to prepare the body for the workout that you will be asked to

do. An efficient warm-up consist of two sections – stretching and some light aerobic work.

A warm-up is important because it:

- Elevates the heart rate smoothly.
- Increases body temperature, which will reduce potential injuries. Remember, muscle, tendons and ligaments need to be warm so they become more pliable and supple.
- Increases blood flow to the muscles. The more blood reaching the muscles, the greater supply of oxygen and glucose, which produce more energy.
- Boosts nerve transmission. Your nerve-muscle coordination will improve, which will mean better performance of movement.
- Prepares the cardiovascular system for the work that is to be done. A steady warm-up will give your heart, lungs and blood vessels time to meet the demands of your paddling session.

Please take the warm-up session seriously and remember – your warm-up time is part of your training time and you need to arrive on time so that you can perform these exercises.

In next month's edition of Paddles Up we will look at the importance of warm-downs.

Crafty Paddlers

Robin Shoebridge gathered together the usual suspects, plus a newbie, for some serious crafty business in March.

The craft day in March saw a mixed bag of projects this time around. We snagged a newbie crafter (Stephanie Barrett) who, along with Jo Jeffcoat, brought their embroidery threads and needles and got themselves busy with tapestry and longstitch. Jo's beautiful work was made up of Australian native flowers (which she designed) to be finished as a padded cover for a blanket box (finally for the new home, I wonder?) and Stephanie was given inimitable guidance by Jo on the finer points of longstitch daffodils.

Pam Bell and Pam Telfer, plus Lyn Tyson and Cynthia Kuiper got cracking to create a page with bright colours and a few photos. We got stuck into Pam B's photo album and between us all we did wonders with it. Pam T put together a beaut page with photos of herself and a Harley in outback Australia, all with the outback Australia theme.

It's all happening again on Monday, 21 April at a scrapbook warehouse/diy location at Taren Point. More information to come soon. Be prepared, it should be great.

Birthday Wishes

Lots of birthdays to celebrate in April and May

Kathleen O'Connor	2 nd April
Pam Rorke	7 th April
Jane Gregory	8 th April
Sergio Piniero	15 th April
Margaret Cantwell	5 th May
Liz Trenam	7 th May
Margo Lynne Lee	11 th May
Rosie O'Donnell	17 th May
Martin Hirst	18 th May
Chris Kwong	18 th May
Michael O'Donnell	29 th May

Paddling in Penang?

Di Williams gives an update on the Penang adventure.

You will all have seen many headings on our group email regarding Penang so I will try and fill you all in on the details.

After performing so well at the National Titles in 2007, Dragons Abreast Sydney was invited to compete in the Grand Dragons category at the World Club Crew Championships in Penang during August 2008. I called for expressions of interest back in September last year from members who might be interested in paddling and received enough responses to enter a team.

Sounds simple, doesn't it? Well, no not exactly. Since then Malaysia has had a change of Government so the new Government had to approve this international event and the organisers in Penang have had a few headaches trying to sort all of this out.

Word has finally come through that the regatta is going ahead, so we are now back on track. We are hoping to get this officially in writing any day now...



It's not too late to take part in this exciting event – and enjoy the fun of travelling with your team mates. The regatta dates are 29th July to 4th August.

Some members are going up a few days earlier and others are extending their trip and making a great holiday out of this overseas experience. Groups are going to Saba and others to Vietnam and Cambodia and we welcome all of you.

Training will be hard through winter, but how exciting to be representing Dragons Abreast Sydney at an International Regatta.

Contact me if you would like to be part of this great paddling experience. da5309@yahoo.com.au

Orders for this year's Entertainment Book are now being taken.




For those who have not used an Entertainment Book before, they are filled with fantastic discount vouchers for restaurants, arts, sports and entertainment attractions, retail, leisure, travel and accommodation vouchers. Books are available for Sydney, North Sydney and Parramatta/Hills editions plus Newcastle & interstate editions.

The Sydney & North Sydney books cost \$65 each and \$13 from the sale of each book goes to our nominated Charity which, naturally, is Dragons Abreast Australia.

Just click on the link below to access the Order Form or contact Brenda Owen at mondofin@bigpond.net.au

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DASydney/files/>



Month	Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
April 2008	Saturday 19th	Entertainment Book voucher swap fest	After paddling	Make the most of the vouchers from the 2007 Entertainment Book before they run out.
	Monday 21st	Crafty Paddlers	Taren Point. Details TBA	Contact Robin Shoebridge at rsho3799@bigpond.net.au
May 2008	Sunday 4th	End of Season Picnic	Federal park, Chapman Road, Annandale	Celebrate a great year in dragon boating with your team mates. BYO tables & chairs, picnic food and food to share, drinks and a sense of fun. 11.00am start, rain or shine.
	Saturday 17th	Market Day	TBA	
June 2008	Saturday 14th	Newbies Day	Banks Street	If you know someone who would like to come and try paddling, this is their chance. However, they MUST be registered in advance. Contact Deb Hirst at mhirst@bigpond.net.au or Wilma Kippers at sydney@dragonsabreast.com.au
	Sunday 29th	DA Sydney Bike Ride	Homebush	For more information contact Carolyn New at carolynn@iinet.net.au
July 2008	Sunday 20th	DA Sydney Bush Walk		Details to be advised
August 2008	 1st – 5th	IDBF Club Crew World Championships	Penang, Malaysia	DASydney Women's Grand Masters crew qualified to compete. Contact Di Williams
September 2008	* Saturday 6th	Newbies Day	Banks Street	
	* Saturday 13th	Mums and Chums	Banks Street	Bring along your nearest and dearest for a paddle. Details to be advised.
October 2008	 Sunday 19th	Dragons Abreast National Corporate Regatta	Darling Harbour	We're bringing the Hospital Challenge into this October event. Corporates and community groups are invited to participate. If you know of any corporate teams that may be interested please forward their details to Cynthia Kuiper so we can send them information packages.
November 2008	 7th & 8th	Pan Pacs Masters Games	Gold Coast	DAA and Club racing over 250m and 500m. Details to be advised.
	* Saturday 29th	Newbies Day	Banks Street	
December 2008	Saturday 6th	DA Sydney Christmas Party	TBA	