



Dragons Abreast Sydney
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Party time

The DASydney Christmas party on December 6 provided the usual mix of good company, delicious food and Christmas cheer, but this year a new element was added – party games. This stroke of genius from the organisers not only got everyone up and mixing, but gave some of our members another outlet for their competitive streak.

Eugenia and Colin Raftos once again provided a wonderful venue, the weather gods were kind and Di Williams and her helpers kept us all entertained and busy with teams competing in quoit throwing, puzzle solving, pinning the bandanna on the dragon and one very strange game involving blindfolds, cotton balls and two bowls (I'll leave it to your imagination). The highlight was the game of Twister to decide the winning team – I'll let the photos tell that story!

After tucking into the delicious dinner, we were treated to a performance of Christmas carols from Carol Fentoullis, Angie Aston and Graham Sheather. Who would have thought we had such talent in our midst.

After the usual present opening frenzy with Di and her helpers handing out gifts to all, it was time for us to head home and get some shut-eye before heading out to race at Penrith the next day.



Our party hosts, Eugenia and Colin Raftos with Di Williams and her party team, Di Ball, Christine Mitchell and Wendy Jensen



Our talented carol singers, Graham Sheather, Carol Fentoullis and Angie Aston



Quoits provided some intense competition.



Muriel, Sergio, Rosie and Claire show off their flexibility in a very amusing game of Twister.



David Owen takes a scientific approach to Pin the Bandanna on the Dragon.



Brenda Owen and Vicki McLean loved their Christmas gifts – prepare for more jokes on the boat in 2009.

Welcome to the January 2009 edition of Paddles Up.

In this edition you can read all about our Christmas merrymaking, exciting racing at Penrith and the Crazy Christmas Paddle. Thanks to our photographic contributors, Chris Kwong and Robin Shoebridge.

Here's to another year of DASzling success for Dragons Abreast Sydney.

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So near ... and yet so far. The close finish to the Masters Women Final



Breaking the barrier

The final regatta for 2008 – a 200m splash and dash at Penrith – proved to be a successful and exciting one for Dragons Abreast Sydney.

Despite a torrential downpour mid afternoon, we all enjoyed a great day of racing, eating and chatting. We could count ourselves lucky we were not out on the water when the storm hit – those who were ended up resembling drowned rats rather than dragons.

With no Grand Dragon racing on offer, we fielded teams in the Masters Women and Masters Mixed categories. The Women's team put in a magnificent effort and came in third in the final in an amazing time of 56.9 seconds, less than a second behind Nowra and Bei Loon.

Our Mixed team also put in a great performance against those young whipper-snappers in their 40s and managed to crash through the one minute barrier, with a time of 57.05 in their second heat.

It will be interesting to see how we can improve on these great results in 2009.



Melanie Cantwell presents team captain Sue Tolhurst with the trophy for Third Place in the Masters Women category



The Masters Women team head out for their second heat.



Mariann Evans enjoyed her first drumming experience at Penrith.



Running for the hills during the downpour.



Alex Oh was kept busy all day as a volunteer.



The DASzlers Masters Mixed team

The Silly Season

Red replaced pink as the colour of choice for the Crazy Christmas Paddle on December 20.

More than 60 paddlers braved the chilly weather in their most outrageous Santa gear and had a fun morning trying to paddle in time to Christmas carols (Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer is the only one that really works), indulging in a bit of “hand paddling” and proving that you really can move the boat by just rocking backwards and forwards. The usual caffeine hit was followed by Yum Cha at the Fish Markets before we all headed off to shop, cook, clean, party etc etc.

Don't forget – paddling starts again on Saturday January 3.



What number am I again? Despite fabulous organisation some of us were still confused.



Sally Oh jingled her way through the paddle.



Would you trust this Santa?



The Christmas Elf (Sergio Pineiro) takes the Christmas Fairy (Vicki McLean) for a ride.



Eugenia Raftos shows off her “nose job” to Sue McClelland



Di Millgate leads the carol singing.

January Birthdays

Happy birthday to all you Capricorns and Aquarians.

Wendy Mann	1st
Angie Aston	4th
Margaret Puddick	6th
Wendy Jensen	6th
Jo Fizell	13th
Gael Ellis	16th
Penny Birtles	18th
Faye Capes	19th
Sally Lynch	21st
Pam Telfer	22nd
Eugenia Raftos	24th
Lyn Alcock	26th
Dianne Williams	30th

Thank you





A big thank you to Robert, the owner of the tennis courts used by Elaine Hall and her friends. In lieu of this year's Christmas gift from Elaine's tennis group he has donated the money (\$70) to Dragons Abreast Sydney to help us continue spreading the message of fun, fitness and friendship after the diagnosis of breast cancer.

Congratulations

Congratulations to all those Dragons Abreast Sydney members who made the NSW State Team. We'll all be cheering you on at the Nationals in April. Meanwhile, it's back to the gym for you all.

After our successful Walk to Penang Wilma is organising another walking/pedometer program to the Nationals starting on Monday 5 January 2009. Instead of walking in a direct line to Caloundra we will go walkabout and visit places you've been to, or always wanted to go to. To participate all you need to do is to wear a pedometer and register with Wilma at wkippers@bigpond.com, nominating one place you'd like to visit.

DRAGONS ABREAST SYDNEY CALENDAR 2009

Month	Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
January 2009	Saturday 3rd	First Saturday training session for 2009	Bank Street	Be there at 7.30am, but don't forget to register first.
	 Saturday 10th	Tacoma Regatta	Wolseley Avenue, Tacoma, Central Coast (Wyong Road exit off F3)	400m racing
	12th-18th	Bank Street Clean Up Roster	Bank Street	It's our turn to tidy up the Bank Street boat ramp area and carpark.
	Saturday 31st	Social event – High Tea with a bit of pampering	Sue Tolhurst's home	3.00pm. Gold coin donation. Contact Di Williams at da5309@yahoo.com.au
February 2009	 7th-8th	Chinese New Year	Darling Harbour	250m racing. Saturday: sports clubs. Sunday: Dragons Abreast racing. Contact Rosie O'Donnell rock8rod@yahoo.com.au
	Saturday 7th	Chinese New Year Banquet	Port Orient Restaurant, Darling Harbour	\$50 per head. Numbers are limited so contact Di Williams at da5309@yahoo.com.au
	Saturday 21st	Newbies Day	Bank Street	Contact Deb Hirst at mhirst@bigpond.net.au
March 2009	 Sunday 21st	State Titles	SIRC Penrith	500m racing. TBA
April 2009	 23rd-26th	National Titles	Sunshine Coast, Queensland	Register your interest with Rosie O'Donnell rock8rod@yahoo.com.au
May 2009	Saturday 9th	Newbies Day	Bank Street	Contact Deb Hirst at mhirst@bigpond.net.au
	Saturday 16th	Dragons Abreast Sydney General Members Meeting	TBA	TBA
	Sunday 17th	End of Season Event		TBA
June 2009	Saturday 20th	Trivia Night	TBA	TBA