

Dragons Abreast Sydney

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Our gang at Newcastle



as many variations as there were races, but she did a great job. The racing was very informal and great fun (being in composite crews hosed down people's egos a bit, I reckon) and we enjoyed paddling with people from different clubs for a change.

That said, DASzlers did very well on the day. Instead of having finals for each category, there was just one final, based on the three best race times from the whole day, regardless of category. We ended up with our four boys in two different boats in the finals in men's crews and one crew of DASzler women – howzat for doing the club proud? So DASzlers came first, second and third!

On the way home again in the bus Vicki McLean secretly penned a tribute to our bus driver, Michael, and Brenda jotted it down for us all – so as we pulled into the parking lot to

The Newcastle Masters and Grand Masters regatta

What a great regatta this was and congratulations to the Newcastle DragonHunters for their initiative in dreaming it up and making it happen. DASydney showed up in force – this was our kind of regatta, after all.

We got off to a great start with our very own bus driver, Michael O'Donnell, doing a pickup run across Sydney before bravely setting off for Newcastle with a busload of over-excited DASzlers (not including his wife, Rosie, who kindly drove up in her car to make space for another bus passenger). Michael thoughtfully arranged a pit-stop just before we arrived at the regatta site. As we were reboarding the bus he confessed, rather sheepishly,

that it takes a fair bit of nerve to go into a truckies' loo wearing a bright pink shirt. We think he deserves a medal for that alone!

Yolande Franklin, the baby of our crew, was the only one who didn't really qualify because her birthday was a couple of months the wrong side of January. However, the organisers gave her special dispensation to be an Honorary Master for the day. With Team Captain, Fairlie Stanish, off traipsing around France and Spain on yet another overseas vacation, Vicki Farmer rose to the occasion with great enthusiasm and efficiency. It wasn't easy working out who went in what races as crews from all the clubs were all mixed up in

DASzlers caught up with some of our ex-members too at Newcastle



Relaxing between races

disgorge our first group of paddlers we all burst into "song" with:

Here's to Michael, he's true blue
Pink round the edges through and through
Here's to Michael so they say
He can drive DASzlers any day
Here's to Michael, Hip Hip Hooray
Maybe not quite ready for Broadway – but belted out with much enthusiasm!

But it's Martin Hirst, a virgin racer, who gives the best description of the day – here's his account of it:

The Newcastle (I can't believe it's not a Regatta) Regatta

The Newcastle Masters Regatta was going to be my first regatta – until I found out that it was not actually a regatta. Never mind... plenty of time for that... What enormous fun we all had. Renewing (and sledging) old acquaintances. Mingling with people from other clubs.

This was so relaxing. No pressure about winning – as a result we woke up without that slight edge you have on the day of a regatta. We are usually so disorganised. Not this time! We had packed the car the night before. Had we forgotten anything? I don't think so. We had everything but the kitchen sink (but only because it wouldn't fit). Tables, nibbles, chairs, fruit, cups, nibbles, plates, nuts, cutlery, nibbles, chopping board, biscuits, camera, nibbles, water, nibbles. With all of that gear, it was a good reason for us not to have joined Michael and the rest of the team on the "Magic School Bus". Didn't that look like a hoot? A rowdy pink bunch piled off the bus and staked a place – a big place – on the shore.

Up went the tent. Up went the schedule on the wall of the tent and, bingo! Marshalling for the first race. I followed the enthusiastic pink swarm down to the marshalling area. Taking the lead of other DASzlers, I sussed out the marshalling area. "How many races are you in?" I was asked. "Three" I responded proudly. "Oh. Only three? Don't worry, if you hang around here, you will get plenty of races." And plenty of races I had!

I was thrown out of an all female team, for some reason. Then Neil and I were removed from another boat when it was discovered that we had taken the place of a couple of Central Coast paddlers who wondered why there was no space for them. I couldn't work out how they spotted us. Neil said it was something to do with their shirts being white. We didn't quite blend in, apparently! Anyway, that boat didn't do very well at all. Neil and I told them that they were "lacking a bit of pink" in the boat.

Eventually, Vic approached me saying: "You really have prostituted yourself today. You are a paddling sl*t." When I explained that I was a lawyer, he seemed to understand. Hey, I even competed in a couple of grand masters races – and I am a baby!

There were other funny moments as well. Barb being caught behind a person who created a maelstrom when paddling. She generated so much spray that Barb could not see the person diagonally opposite her, let alone the strokes! But Barb did not stop laughing the



Our Boys ready for battle!

whole race. It was that kind of a day.

The races flew past in a blur. What a well organised regatta. The races ran on time. There was no fuss. There was no chaos. What a brilliant job our Newcastle friends did. ... and, what a perfect day they put on for us. Clear blue sky and a slight breeze to keep the heat away (and to disguise the fact that I was being fried like a chip!).

What I can say about the racing, is that DASzlers certainly stood out! And it was not just the colour. The strength of you ladies is phenomenal. The timing and style you displayed was beautiful to watch. But it didn't stop there. Neil, Michael and Sergio did us proud as well. We are so lucky to have such a committed and strong bunch of chaps – and a nicer three mates I could not hope to have.

Then as I wandered back to the tent I heard the familiar sound of Brenda's dulcet tones wafting across the river, urging her crew on to heights that they would not otherwise have been capable of achieving. So, it didn't stop at paddling. DAS provided the best sweeps on the day as well – Claire, Carol, Cynthia and Brenda.

No sooner did the racing start, than it was over (all too soon). The cars and the bus were packed and within moments we were gone. The area had the strangely desolate feel of a park after the circus has departed. What a great day. Let's hope that this becomes a regular fixture. If this meet was an indication of the strength of the DASzlers for this season, it is truly going to be awesome.

Martin Hirst



The trophies were edible

M&M Mania

The Pink & White M&M fundraiser was not only a lot of fun & yummy chocolate, it was yet another opportunity, initiated by Michelle Hanton, for DASydney to raise valuable funds for our survival. This was a special campaign which helped not only DASydney, but also DAA and the McGrath Foundation.

DASydney will receive \$24 from the sale of each box of boxes. DAA will then be issued with points (from all the participating DA clubs in Australia) to be converted into products which will in turn be raffled for 2007 fundraising. The remaining profits will go to benefit the McGrath Foundation and the Breast Care Nurses of Australia.

This was a one-off opportunity for us, as Mars Funding will not be doing the Pink & Whites again. Retail stores will now be selling Pink & Whites for the benefit of the McGrath Foundation. So, thanks to Gael Ellis, Vicki McLean & everyone who took part in this exercise, it has been great fun – and apologies to Fairlie & the K calorie Kouting Kids. We can now get back into the weight control program.

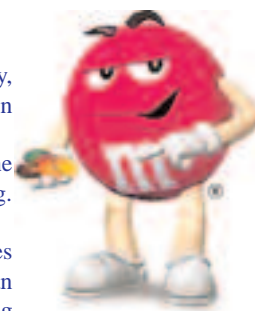
As the remnants of the money dribbles in I am happy to report that it has been a resounding success. We took a deep breath and committed to a whole palette load – 126 boxes of chocolate, which was dropped on Cynthia's door step early in August. Gael, Vicki McL, Cynthia & I met the Woman from Mars and then loaded up our cars with the precious cargo. DASydney embraced this effort in spectacular fashion, as usual, dispensing with not only the initial 126 boxes but an additional 10 boxes had to be ordered to cover demand.

I think a number of us were taken by surprise at how easy these little Pink & Whites were to sell. A large number of us sold multiple boxes, coming back for more week after week. Robin Shoebridge, Debbie Story, Sophie Marinucci and Eugenia Raftos were star performers & collectively dispensed with nearly 30 boxes. A gong must go to our son Mitch who sold 10 whole boxes to the boys at his school in just 30 minutes – it was a great BC awareness message for the boys to take home to their mothers - but I don't suppose any of the chocolates managed to last long enough to make it home.

To date DASydney has raised \$2,464.00 in profit from this exercise and we are aiming for a minimum of \$3,264.00. **This means that some of you still have not returned your M&M money. If this is you, could you please make sure that you get it to me URGENTLY.**

One thought to leave you with: We have just orchestrated the consumption of 709,920 grams of chocolate mmm!!!!

Brenda Owen



Our Cover Girls

Back in July we published this photo but weren't allowed at the time to explain its provenance. Well now we can admit to some detail. As you may know the drug company, AstraZeneca oncology, has come on board as a sponsor for DAA and Abreast in Australia. As part of that deal they are featuring real breast cancer survivors in their breast cancer product advertising. And where did they look for those models? DAA of course. The ladies they chose for the photoshoot are Catherine Holland (Illawarra DA), our own Margot Case (DASydney), Vivienne Gregg (Armidale), Barb Williams (Pendragons Abreast) and our Mistress of Merchandising Brenda Owen (DASydney).

There is a big ad on the back cover of this month's Pink Ribbon magazine, advertising DAA and 2007. It was made possible with the support of AstraZeneca oncology. The Pink Ribbon Magazine will be distributed this month bundled with the Woman's Weekly magazine, but only if you buy it from Woolworths.

Marvellous models weren't our only breast cancer awareness raising efforts for the month. On 8th September I was privileged to speak at the radiotherapists graduate education day at the Mater Hospital. It was a wonderful opportunity to explain to these (mostly) young professionals how Dragons Abreast can help their patients continue their recovery after their hospital treatment finishes.



Radiotherapy is generally the last phase of formal hospital-based treatment for most breast cancer patients, so the radiotherapists are ideally placed to encourage patients to think about Dragons Abreast.

A week later I had a chance to chat with a

small group of women who were just finishing up their eight week Encore exercise programme at Lewisham Hospital. It will be great if we can encourage more Encore graduates to press on with their recovery by joining Dragons Abreast.

Lovin' that Scrapbooking

Well, we did it again! Another happy day with the scissors and paste for our Crafty Ladies in September. This time we were doing clever things with paper curling (hard to explain, but it's a technique for "highlighting and lifting" a key subject out of a photograph). We also fiddled around with liquid chalk, which produces a quite different effect than plain photos on paper. The twins made it for the day (heaven knows how with their Macau training being so intense at the time), along with Lyn Tyson, Geri Hill, Margot Case, Sally Lynch (a new craft recruit who dollied up a fabulous photo of a crimson rosella), Margo-Lynne Lee and of course our Scrapbook Supremo, Robin Shoebridge, who helped out with the knowhow.

The next craft day is tentatively Friday 17th November – we'll be learning scrapbooking heritage photos (doesn't everybody have fascinating faded old family photos to preserve?). Register with Robin Shoebridge if you would like to join in.



Waiting for inspiration at the start

Mastery in Macau

Speaking of the twins, Jo and Jenny Petterson – they may not paddle for DASydney any more, but that doesn't make us any less proud of their efforts. Unfortunately I don't have any photos yet (they are paddling in Singapore this weekend – gotta hand it to the twins, just a whiff of a paddle somewhere and they are off!) but the AUSquad astounded the locals with their magnificent performance at the Asian Dragon Boat Championships in Macau. This was the first time an Aussie team had ever raced paddling in the traditional style (ie standing up!!) You have to know that the twins

couldn't resist a challenge like that and they both made the team, naturally. As far as I can tell, the Aussies are bringing home a medal haul of 6 bronze (they prefer to call it dark gold), and 5 fourths. In addition, Australia was awarded third place for the regatta as a whole. Isn't that a phenomenal achievement? Their coach, Chris Alexandrou (we call him "Zeus") had this to say:

"This was the first time the Australian team was paddling "freestyle" or using the standup method (in fact the first time their coach ever saw it in a real life race was during the first heat when the Aus Opens crew stood up and

blitzed the entire field). There were numerous positive comments from the other country's coaches, as well as a glorious backhander from the commentator who said, in Cantonese, 'they stand pretty good for a bunch of westerners!'"

Let's hope the twins will turn up to coffee one day with all their medals clinking around their necks to show us. Well done Aussies and well done, Zeus, for coaching them!

Late-breaking news: Some of the AUSquad remained in mainland China to compete in the Binzhou Provincial races and they... JUST WON GOLD!!!



Jo and Jenny with the AUSquad after the Asian-style racing demo at Rodd Point – all fired up for Macau

DAA AGM in Caloundra

Anyone who knows me well will know how much I hate to miss a paddle, so it was somewhat reluctantly that I headed up to Caloundra the first weekend in September for the DAA AGM. Of course once I got there it was great to see the directors and other coordinators, to swap notes, pick their brains and just enjoy their company. Turns out it was a very valuable weekend. As always, I learned a lot, particularly about Abreast in Australia, which I'm



Inspecting the Quad Park regatta course



Kings Beach, Caloundra

convinced is going to be a real blast!

We spent the Saturday morning touring the various venues for the Abreast in Australia Festival. First stop was to be the race course (at Quad Park in Kawana). In a reminder how easy it is to miscommunicate when you omit a word here or there – the minibus driver took us to the race course, all right – the horse race course – we'd left out the word "regatta" in front of "race course" when saying where we wanted to go.

Quad Park is brand new and not unlike the Olympic regatta centre at Penrith, before the trees grew up. However it's prettier than Penrith and has little sandy beaches along the side (where toddlers will no doubt build sand castles and wade about while their minds watch us race past) – so it's quite family-friendly. The paddlers' village and parking is off to one side and the marketplace and displays will run alongside, parallel to the course – all very together but spacious. As well there's a stadium in the process of being built and a lovely, big swimming pool in case it's really hot.

We also visited the Ettamogah Pub and Aussie World where the big party will be. What's really cool about that is that families will be able to bring their kids to the party with them and they'll have a ball too because all the rides will be free (kids under 2 will be free at the whole Festival and there is a reduced Festival registration for older kids, but that registration entitles them to attend everything during the Festival).

Then we went to Caloundra and checked out Kings Beach and some of the hotels and the town centre. It's a lovely area and apparently the whole town is getting involved in Abreast in Australia, so the place will have a lovely buzzy atmosphere. There are endless varieties of accommodation there, although we just looked at the main places. There is also a great range of eateries, so everyone will be able to find something to suit their taste and budget. The area is packed with holiday activities; surfing, kayaking; fishing; sky-diving; diving; motor bike trips; whale watching; you name it...! So think about taking the whole family and staying a little longer – might as well get maximum bang for your airfare bucks and make a holiday out of it – there's even a Greg Norman-designed golf course nearby.

But you'll need to move fast because it will be Queensland school holidays, so much of the town is booked out to regulars – plus overseas paddlers have already bagged a lot of what's left. (Check out www.caloundra.tourism.com.au for help with accommodation.)

The weather in Caloundra in September should be great – not too hot and the surf there is free of nasties like irukanji and box jellyfish – there aren't even any crocodiles (except in Australia Zoo, of course – it's in town too!).

The Opening Ceremony will be in the park at Kings Beach – a lovely bowl-shaped park with several sound shells/stages around it, so everyone will be able to see and hear everything. Can't tell you any more about that as it's a surprise!

For the rest of the day and all day Sunday we were locked up in meetings. We learned about several enticing opportunities available through DAA – the most exciting of these is through an organization called Amazon Heart which runs amazing expeditions and adventures for breast cancer survivors. Closer to home, there is the opportunity through DAA to become certified as Lebed Method trainers (see below).

The Lebed Method

Another opportunity which may interest some of you will be the Lebed workshops at Abreast in Australia. "The Lebed Method" has been available in the US for 25 years already and is aimed at helping breast cancer survivors recover both physically and emotionally. It was devised by Sherry Lebed Davis, a dancer, and her two brothers, both physicians, in response to their mother's recuperative needs after breast cancer surgery. The program combines sound physiotherapy practice with the freeing aspects of graceful movement, incorporating music, positive reinforcement, empowerment from information and education. So, the Lebed Program is not unlike Encore, except for the huge plus that it doesn't require a swimming pool. That means it can also benefit people who are bed- or chair-bound and not necessarily bc survivors – eg the elderly, or anyone who's been sick for a long time. DAA is lining up with the Lebed program because it can be done anywhere (in hospital, in nursing homes, even with housebound patients) and we believe our members can make great teachers. So by completing the Lebed teacher training workshop at the Festival you can then qualify as a trainer and earn a little pocket money on the side while doing good in the community. And you thought Kawana was just about paddling. Lebed training is just one of the workshops you might want to do while you are there.

Amazon Heart

It was started up by two young BC survivors who wondered to themselves what life held after breast cancer. "What if breast cancer could be just the start of an incredible journey?" they said to themselves. So they set about arranging the first of a number of challenging adventures for bc survivors. First they organised a marathon Harley Davidson motor bike ride up the west coast of the US. It was a huge success and the whole group had a ball. In the process they raised breast cancer awareness and lots of money for breast cancer.

Amazon Heart has also arranged challenging expeditions like the recent climb up Mt Hope in New Zealand. Inspired by these achievements they then invented Amazon Heart Odysseys which have included going to Sri Lanka to help rebuild homes after the tsunami, and going to a Blackfoot Reservation in Montana where they built a cultural centre (none of them had ever held a saw or drill before, let alone built anything). Seems Amazon Heart girls share with us that same spirit of adventure and "We Can Do Anything".

This month (starting on October 13th) Amazon Heart Thunder will roar up our Pacific Coast from Sydney to the Sunshine Coast and the money raised will go to – wait for it – DAA! They have identified DAA as a kindred organization – aimed at helping survivors get back into life after breast cancer. Check out their website at www.amazonheart.org – you might decide to join one of their expeditions.

Any survivor can join in the Amazon Heart activities and a number of DAA girls are participating in this month's ride in Australia (the bikes will be loaned by Harley Davidson and of course you get to learn how to ride them first). In December this year they will be heading to Tamil Nadu, in India, to build a cottage for orphans. Interested?



A prostrate Kathryn Pineiro after her erg

be able to quantify their improvement and that can be very gratifying.

Congratulations to those DASydney hopefuls who subjected themselves to this unique horror. A few have been diligently practicing on the erg week after week, particularly "our boys". It must have helped, because to their credit, they improved their ratings impressively every time they tried (talk about determination – but then they don't have a monopoly on that – our Eveready Bunny, Eugenia Raftos, jumped on the erg at every opportunity as well).

Masochistic Madness

This month some of our girls (and guys) decided to try out for the NSW State Squad – just the "tragics" you understand. Apart from scaring the bejeezus out of you, it involves hopping on the erg and "paddling" frantically for two minutes (and praying that you live that long). If you're not familiar with this particular torture machine, the erg is a gym-style rowing machine which has been modified for a paddle action.

In the picture of Sergio on the erg you can see his pain clearly reflected in the faces of the onlookers. A few newer girls also did the erg to establish a personal benchmark – a neat idea so when they do it again next year they'll



Sergio Pineiro surging



Elaine Beggs going for broke while onlookers wince in sympathy

Bargain Bus or Bust!

Shoppers! Are You Ready? Attention! Gooooooo! You can get all your Christmas shopping out of the way this month simply by hopping aboard the DASydney Bargain Bus on Saturday 14th October. Bring your friends and family along too – they'll never forgive you if they miss out. Contact Angie Aston to be one of the lucky ones taking advantage of this "first" for DASydney.

Milestones

So what is it about October that protects people from breast cancer – or giving birth? Just kidding! However, it is amazing that we have only one birthday girl this month – our irreplaceable Di Millgate will bask in the glow of candles on the 6th October. Happy Birthday, Di, have a good one!

Reminders

Don't forget to put the Roseville regatta in your diary – first Sunday in November. It's one of the prettiest venues on the race calendar and always great fun. We're hoping too that we'll be allowed to have a tilt at the Skins Event on Friday evening, 24th November – so jot that one down too, in case we are given the chance.

Paddles Up!
Cynth

DAS CALENDAR 2006.2007

Date(s)	Event	Location	Details
October 2006			
Sun 8th	DBNSW Regatta, Race 1	Penrith SIRC	Hosted by CYL, 500m. Register now with Vicki Farmer
Sat 14th	DASydney Shopping Expedition	TBA	All your Christms shopping swings in one day! Bookings essentail with Angie Aston on angelaa@nswcc.org.au
Fri 20th	Inaugural Skins Regatta	Blackwattle Bay, Bank St	
Sat 21st	Farewell Brunch for Margot Case	Studio 4, Pyrmont	After the paddle – book with Robin Shoebridge
November 2006			
Sat 5th	DBNSW Regatta, Race 2	Roseville	Hosted by PDs
Wed 8th	Zonta Club of Hornsby meeting	Killara	Guest speaker: Cynthia Kuiper
Fri 10th	Breast Care Nurses Dragon Boating Morning	Bank St, Pyrmont	To be conducted by Claire Hendy, Margo-Lynne Lee, Wilma Kippers and Cynthia Kuiper.
10th – 11th	Pan Pacific Masters Games	Gold Coast	Contact team Captain, Fairlie Stanish for more details on fstanish@optusnet.com.au
Fri 17th	DASydney Craft Group	Pymble	Scrapbooking heritage photos. Register with Robin Shoebridge
Fri 24th	Twilight Paddle	Blackwattle Bay, Bank St	
December 2006			
Sun 3rd	DBNSW Regatta, Race 3	Penrith SIRC	Hosted by Sloths, 200m
January 2007			
Sat 13th	Tacoma Regatta	Tacoma River, Wyong	This regatta's lots of fun – put it in your diary now
Fri 19th	Twilight Paddle	Blackwattle Bay, Bank St	
February 2007			
24th - 25th	Chinese New Year	Darling Harbour	You'll want to set aside the whole weekend – it's the highlight of the paddling year.
Sat 24th	DASydney Chinese New Year Banquet	Chinatown	TBA
March 2007			
Sat 24th	NSW State Titles	Penrith SIRC	
April 2007			
5th – 8th	AusDBF National Titles	Penrith SIRC	
September 2007			
19th – 23rd	IDBF World Dragon Boat Championships	Penrith SIRC	We'll need lots of competitors and lots of volunteers
28th - 30th	Abreast in Australia Dragon Boat Festival	Kawana Lakes, Sunshine Coast, QLD	This is gonna be awesome! Make sure you don't miss out.