



## Dragon Tales – National newsletter

September 2010

### AusDBF Update

#### IDBF Competition Technical Commission - Report by Mel Cantwell

Over the next twelve months some of the items the Commission will be looking at and preparing submission on for Congress in Tampa are:

Rules for the 2km race; overhaul of the Rules and Regs to simplify some of them,

Mentoring – working with the younger generation coming through as the future of IDBF.

Considering appointing someone in the Asian region to undertake inspection of boats and measuring of paddles etc .

There was discussion on the standard of venues and the differences which occur from when inspections are first completed to 12-24 months later when the actual championships are held in terms of water quality, depth, consistency across lanes etc. This is still being investigated and developed.

#### Cultural Committee

The group meeting was held in mid July and one of the outcomes is the preparation of a document which will assist paddlers increase their knowledge of what a Dotting of the Eyes ceremony entails and how to go about raising public awareness of our sport. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for mid August. Any issues relating to Dragon Boats cultural aspects can be openly discussed and resolved at these meetings, as well as working towards raising the cultural aspect of our sport around Australia.

Chaired by Phillip Chan, Cultural Director of AusDBF, the Cultural Committee will be advising each AusDBF Member (State/Territory dragon boat bodies and DAA) and their Clubs on the cultural aspects of dragon boating and assist each AusDBF Member to look for opportunities to integrate cultural aspects into teams and regattas.

ACT: Olivia Tiong

DAA: Rosie O'Donnell

NSW: Linda Collins

NT: Austin Chin

QLD: Richard Lim

SA: Wee-Ching Kong

TAS: Moira Cannell

VIC: David Wong

WA: Debra Ree

AusDBF believes that the cultural aspects are an important part of dragon boating and perfectly balance with the sporting aspects.

Representatives of the Cultural Sub-Committee will be “go to” contacts within each AusDBF Member for information, templates, procedures, contacts for cultural aspects. Their first task will be to formulate a central Cultural Procedures document that

can be used as a template by each state, territory and body. This document will include the procedures for the blessing of dragon boats at major or significant regattas for each state to follow.

AusDBF advises all clubs that cultural aspects should be part of any formal public dragon boat activities. AusDBF requests that clubs seek out the Sub-Committee member from your state or territory for advice on how to incorporate cultural aspects into club activities.

Stay tuned for more updates on how AusDBF is working with you and your organising body to reinvigorate the Cultural Aspects in Dragon boating!

Any suggestions please email me or [cultural@ausdbf.com.au](mailto:cultural@ausdbf.com.au)  
Phil Chan

#### Great Grandmasters Make History

The exhilaration of being part of the inaugural Great Grand Masters event at the 2010 National Championships in Adelaide is hard to get over. Paddlers aged 60+ from South Australia, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia were thrilled to be the first GGD's in the world to compete at a national dragon boat championship. We beat the Canadians to this honour. They will be holding their inaugural GGD event at their national championships later this year. Mixed teams were fielded by each state and Queensland also fielded a women's team, which raced in the GM division's women's category. South Australia won the grand final in an excellent time of 2 minutes 20.64 seconds, demonstrating that GGDs can be and are competitive at the national level.





Many thanks to AusDBF for making this possible. Sexagenarians - plus who knows how many 70+ years paddlers, enjoyed the thrill of racing. Just being there was fantastic. Our Victorian paddlers went home with a determination to make it back next year with a stronger and bigger contingent of GGD's - to train hard, buy a new paddle, do more gym workouts, recruit others, whatever it takes to make it happen.

Clearly South Australia and Queensland will be hard to beat. Victoria and Western Australia will build up to full teams. New South Wales and the ACT will be there also as we know that they have got the numbers to participate. It will be great to have teams from all states and territories compete next year. Who knows in a few years time we may be competing at the IDBF world championships!

So many happy memories of a great day fill one's mind. Comments from our team members illustrate their joy:

*We will be back with even greater enthusiasm at next year's event with the hope that we can encourage all the states to field a team of GGDs.*

*... still coming down from the high ....So many happy memories to cling to. My wish is to do it all again in Canberra in a full boat!*

*....what a difference a boat makes with Men in it - and what a lovely lot of Men, oh la la??*

*...Enjoyed the hard training, enjoyed the hard paddling on race day and very happy with the cup & medals.*

*...It would be fantastic if we could somehow organise paddling sessions for GGDs every few weeks, perhaps regionally as well.....and with a full boat - who knows?????*

*...Still over the moon.....All the travelling to Docklands was worth it.*

*...Thanks to everyone for the fun we had in the brief time the team was together. I want to do it next year!*

Credit goes to Joe Gomory for his vision and determination in getting the GGD age group up there. Congratulations to all the paddlers and thanks to AusDBF for making it happen.

#### FOOTNOTE:

AusDBF has scored a significant policy win with the IDBF Council adopting the decision to introduce the Great Grand Masters (Masters C Category 60+ years) at the 2013 World Championships.

AusDBF adopted the category on a trial basis in 2009 following the lobbying by Australian paddlers, and brought the proposal to the IDBF's 2009 meeting at the Prague-hosted World Championships last September.

The decision gives Aussie crews the opportunity to prepare and organise strongly for the event in just 3 short years, and to maintain a focus on growing the category at the local Australian level, with the category guaranteed inclusion in 2011 and 2012 Australian Championships.

## September Meeting

Following on from the AusDBF Championships held in Adelaide in April, AusDBF received suggestions from paddlers as to how to improve these national events. On Sunday 12 September AusDBF Board will be revisiting its Rules and Regulations (as promised at the 2010 AGM in Adelaide), as well as the current status of the High Performance Sub-Committee (HPC) and an open forum discussion. The day will start at 9.30am and conclude at 4pm to allow members representatives to get flights.

Please RSVP to Janine Lette at [admin@ausdbf.com.au](mailto:admin@ausdbf.com.au) by Friday 3 September 2010. If you can't attend, please forward any feedback regarding the Rules & Regs that you would like raised to me as well.

## President's Report Sept 2011

Australian Dragon Boat has never stood taller than what it does right now.

As we look forward to the new race season of 2010-2011, a quick glimpse over the last year, and an eye to the coming 12 months will have all members salivating at what lies ahead, as well as a pumped up chest about over recent achievements.

This time last year our green and gold warriors were walking away from the Prague-hosted World Championships with a swag of medals, including just our fourth gold medal and World Championship, in the Mixed Masters 500m category.

The new season then heralded a record national membership and the smashing of the record for total competitors at our Australian Championships. Dragonboat South Australia (DBSA) put on a tremendous show at Adelaide's West Lakes course, which saw 1973 paddlers battle it out for racing honours. The previous record, set at Caloundra just 12 months earlier of nearly 1500, seems 'reasonable' now. The Canberra-hosted 2011 Australian Championships looks set to break the magical 2000 mark for the first time.

The 2010 Championship hosted every stated and territory, with the Tasmanian squad competing for the first time. The largest and most competitive junior category also featured, with five states entering representative and club teams. The spread of medals across the country showed that our developing paddlers have a nation-wide

strength and will be winning international medals for us in the coming years.

While the 2010 Championships deserve to be contemplated with enjoyment for some time yet, AusDBF is already looking forward. The 2011 Canberra-hosted event is well-planned and well-progressed already. The 'Canberra experience' the CDBA intends to offer the Australian paddling community will be something special, with the race course set in Central Basin in between Parliament House and the Australian War Memorial on Lake Burley Griffin. The Opening Ceremony on Wednesday 30 March will feature cultural performances, while the first race day on 31 March will see the introduction of a pledge taken by all paddlers to be true to the 'Dragon Spirit', in much the way the Olympic Games starts with an oath. The After Party on the last day of competition - Sunday 3 April will be at the Australian Institute of Sport and the last weekend of daylight saving should prove to be of benefit to our biggest ever race program.

The Australian Championships will feature the presentation of jerseys to the Auroras - the Australian Squad to take on the World Championships in August next year. The squad's formation will start with the announcement of the Head Coach in the coming days, and then progress with the appointment of divisional coaches and the first of the trials, which will be held in each of the states and



territories. An expanded squad will be whittled down to a final 26 men and women in the junior, youth (U23), Premier, Masters and Grand Masters categories in the new year. The first nationally selected World Championship Australian team will be something special to watch in action, and if the form shown at the World Club Crews last month is any guide, the Auroras will be a regular on the podium at Tampa Bay in 2011.

Macau's steamy and wet conditions were not enough to deter Australian paddlers from their climb up the world rankings at the World Club Champs, with our best ever medal haul and the grabbing of several World Championships.

Congratulations to Brisbane River Dragons, Currumbin, and the Pacific Dragons who grabbed World Titles, and to the clubs that grabbed silver and bronze over the five days of competition. To qualify for the event is an achievement, but to then battle through winter training and maintain the mental focus on a regatta while the rest of the country slips into an off season is especially commendable.

The High Performance Committee which has been shaping our elite development proposals and World Championships

selection policies will be especially pleased to see the form shown by Australian paddlers. Chaired by Amanda Wylie, the Committee of Gary Quartermain, Brenda Byrne, George Bradilovic, Gavin Godfrey, Vic Fazakerley, Serghei Cucsă and AusDBF Development Director Chris 'Zeus' Alexandrou have been working with the AusDBF Board to ensure the Auroras build on the success of our 2010 Asian Championships squad that secured two silver and two bronze medals in Wujin, China in May. Based on the close and fast results in Adelaide, the Asian and Club Champs, the green and gold is about to enter a golden era.

While success on water has been a feature of the sport, the steady climb in international influence off water is also worthy of a special mention. The AusDBF presence at international Council and Executive meetings has been powerful. Perhaps to the point where I suspect I have dropped off some Christmas Card lists. However, my view that I am there to get the best deal for Australia and to build the sport into a professional machine encompassing all aspects - from the cultural, to social, to elite - is such that sacrificing popularity for progress is not a question that has to be asked. Although still a developing

sport and country, Australia is a leader in the international community and we won't be settling for a 'yes man' role.

The work of our officials has been rewarded with the promotion of several Australians to key roles in international events. Darwin icon Phil Reader is now a regular IDBF starter, and his dulcet tones will be again heard in Tampa after his sublime performance in Macau. Special congratulations are extended to AusDBF Board members and IDBF officials Melanie Cantwell (NSW) and Janine Lette (Qld) who both acted as Chief Official for two days each at the World Championships. They are the first women to hold the position and will bring a wealth of experience and skill back to our shores for the coming season and beyond. Their patience and skills will be tested at the 2011 Australian Championships, where the regular state and club paddlers will be joined by a truckload of university students who will be competing in the inaugural Australian University Dragon Boat Championships.

Now officially part of the University Games program, dragon boat racing is set to reap the benefits of a deliberate development plan from AusDBF. Our first dabble into Inter Varsity competition will allow us to tap into a target demographic and expose the sport to potential club members that will be the back bone of state and national teams over the coming decade. Even if they drive our officials crazy...

As you read this, the Dragons Abreast fundraising calendar is now on sale. The special, eye-popping and somewhat risqué production is just \$20 and makes for a memorable

Christmas present. I have already grabbed my own while visiting Darwin last month, and took the opportunity to grab the autographs of many of the DA models attending the DAA-DBNT corporate regatta.

The visit by the AusDBF Board to the top end is on the back of the AusDBF visit to Perth in July, and comes just ahead of the trip to Tasmania in September. By the time we assemble with all state executives for the mid-year meeting in Canberra in November, the AusDBF Board will have been to every state and territory this year - a remarkable commitment to the development of the sport across the country, and testimony to the activity of all state bodies.

I wish you all the best for the coming season and can barely wait for the time we all assemble and take to the water in Canberra on 31 March-3 April next year. There is no doubt that this will be the nation's biggest dragon boat season ever, and that we now stand on the verge of the sport's blossoming into full adulthood and the taking of its place on the sporting stage as a respected and powerful player.

On the water!

Kel

Kel Watt

AusDBF President



Macau

## Apology:

Sorry for the late delivery of the AusDBF Newsletter - due to family illness, I was unable to complete before leaving for Macau. The June issue of our AusDBF Newsletter was held over, so this mid quarter edition will bring all the Regatta news to you - apologies guys; enjoy this edition. Most of us were busy training over the May June July period, so there is very little other news. Janelle

## Regatta Reports

### Adelaide SA

By now this will be a distant memory for most paddlers. However it achieved many firsts for an Australian Championship event. Almost 2000 competitors from 47 Clubs attended the four day regatta in April. With continued input from many, our AusDBF Technical Director and fellow Board members have annually improved the management of this key regatta on the dragon boat calendar, and 2011 in Canberra may well prove to be better still. Following Adelaide's Championships, several suggested improvements are on the table, so the opportunity for improvement continues. Majority of the entries were able to be completed electronically, with transactions available via the internet.

2010 saw every State and Territory competing in Adelaide. "Derwent Storm" from Tasmania competed in 200m, 500m and 2000m and acquitted themselves well and we congratulate them on this - their initial foray into National competition. Our Oceania neighbours in NZ

attended and even though a small representative team, they also left their mark on these Championships. It was very pleasing to be able to welcome them to our competition, and AusDBF encourages this budding relationship with more cross Tasman competition in coming months. It was agreed that foreign teams would not be included in major finals, but AusDBF is interested to have input from our paddling community as to how they feel about this restriction. Are Aussie teams prepared to go head to head with stiff competition from outside our borders, or do we limit Championship glory to our own? The After Party location was something else! Feedback has been very positive, and it seems that even late comers were adequately fed and watered - and entertained late into the night.

Congratulations to DBSA's organising committee led by John Holland, and sincere thank you to the many many cheerful volunteers, who are the back bone of events such as this. Well done too, each and every paddler whether you

took home bling or not - the camaraderie shown by all is what dragon boat is about. Some elite paddlers have gone on to represent their clubs at the IDBF Club Crew World Championship in Macau and represented exceptionally well.

### May 2010 - Asian Championships in Wujin, China

#### What a success story this was!

With very little preparation time, the AusDBF board members Kel Watt and Chris Alexandrou led the charge to China! The most highly qualified Coach in Australia, Serghei Cusca agreed to give his all to the selection of the team which left Australia just 24 hours after the Adelaide

Championship. The results speak for themselves. The "Auroras" put in extraordinary effort when training at the two camps hastily organised before Adelaide, and these paddlers from several States were honoured on the dais with the presentation of their new jerseys following their qualification. Video footage of the racing shows fierce competition from the Asian crews but the Auroras held their own and brought home the goods - congratulations Auroras!

Returning paddlers were full of praise for their coach and have sent messages of support encouraging him to continue in this vein should further opportunities arise. They seem to thrive on hard work!





## IBCPC International Dragon Boat Festival 2010

JUNE 11-13, 2010

*Peterborough, Ontario, Canada*

Breast cancer survivor teams from all over the world participated in the International Dragon Boat Festival in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, June 11–13, 2010. This was the third festival of its kind. Previous festivals have been held in Vancouver, Canada and Caloundra, Australia. The venue for the festival was Little Lake at Del Crary Park in downtown Peterborough. Survivors Abreast, Peterborough's survivor team, were tickled pink to have hosted this worldwide event. Several crews from Australia participated and from all reports, the ladies have had a fantastic visit.

Our Australian crews came from far and wide and included Amazons from Perth, Aussie Dragon Flies

Port Macquarie, Boobialla Tasmania, Dam Busters Caulfield Victoria, Dragons Abreast Gold Coast, Dragons Abreast Hope, Inspiration and Spirit - members from all over Australia, Dragons Abreast Brisbane Missabittatitti, Dragons Abreast Sydney, Nipples on Ripples Devonport Tasmania, Pittwater Pinks Collaroy Beach, Snapdragons Redcliffe and Tickled Pink from Canberra.

The event is organized under the auspices of the **International Breast Cancer Paddler's Commission (IBCPC)**. The primary objective of IBCPC festivals is to promote breast cancer awareness internationally and to encourage participation from breast cancer survivors.

### Asian Games

For the first time an Australian National dragon boat team - the Auroras - was invited to race at the Asian Games in Guangzhou, China in November 2010, but much to the disappointment of all, the invitation was withdrawn due to Auroras no longer meeting the technical requirements for entry. In order to gain entry, the team needed approval from the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) to compete. Whilst we

received significant support for our participation and racing in November, the AOC does not hold responsibility for dragon boat racing as it is not yet an Olympic Sport and Australia is no longer a competitor at the Asian Games.

The Asian Games are the peak sporting event in Asia, and is the third largest sporting event in the world (behind the Olympic Games and the Soccer World Cup). With a predicted television audience of over two billion people this represented a prime opportunity to highlight Australian dragon boating both within Australia and within our region.

While AusDBF accepted the invitation and aggressively pursued our entry and formal acceptance into the Games, organisers were reluctant to commit one way or another until July.

Despite Kel Watt's persistent arguments the Asian Games organisers provided this advice: "Art.55 of OCA Constitution & Rules reads:

- Only Member NOCs of the OCA can enter competitors in the Asian Games.
- In this circumstance, it is regret that the AusDBF cannot make the entry to Asian Games."

AusDBF pursued every available option and opportunity to convince organisers that we should remain as competitors. However, we must remain positive and continue to push ahead in developing our national team with national selection, and see the best 26 men and women from around Australia secure selection for the 2011 Worlds in upcoming trials.

### July August 2010 - IDBF 8th CCWC Macau, SAR China.

The 2010 World Club Crew Championships was the most successful to date for several of the Australian clubs which participated, and those which did not medal can hold their heads high as the standard of competition was world class throughout the four days of the event. Events such as this bring out the camaraderie of the Aussie paddlers and teams enthusiastically cheered on their fellow countrymen, despite being fierce competitors at home.

The first day of 2000m turn racing set the standard, with full video footage from every angle of the races on the big screen for all to watch.





Standard Boats - Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total medals
Brisbane River Dragons	3	3	4	10
Currumbin	3	0	0	3
Pacific Dragons	1	1	0	2
Burleigh Fire Dragons	0	1	2	3
Adelaide Sea Dragons	0	2	0	2
Broadwater Dragons	0	0	1	1

The organisers managed most requirements well and are to be congratulated on running a very professional regatta. A group of over 70 IDBF Officials came together from 15 countries and enabled the Championship to run smoothly for over 3800 competitors. A big thank you to Chung Hon Kun and Peter Tang from the Macau Dragon Boat Association for their organisation, help and support of the IDBF Officials. Several IDBF Officials passed their exams - congratulations to Mel Cantwell and Janine Lette who acted as Assistant Chief Officials and were successful in gaining their IDBF Grade 4 status; Belinda Chung and Doug Sinclair passing the grade 2 and Ming Tang and Dallas Piwari passing the IDBF Level 1 exams

The course was well set out and the pontoons and toggles made for snappy starts, with concise directions given by the starter, DBNT's Phil Reader. The Marshalling was smoothly directed with no delays - the electronic data collection was great. The

BUK boats - what can anyone complain about with these great boats?

The only complaint - and a valid one - was the lack of accommodation provided for the paddlers. Many crews were expected to wait for their races in what can best be described as bamboo stables with tin roofs across the road from the venue. Following days of monsoonal rain, the mud and humidity made it impossible and totally unacceptable for competitors to remain there. Those crews lucky enough to be accommodated on the course, were not well catered for either. The amount of space under shade was totally inadequate for the number of paddlers - poor planning indeed. The paddlers are the most important element in these events, but are often neglected in favour of officialdom. The 500 seat + shaded pavilion allocated for VIPs remained unused for the majority of the competition - occupied by only a handful of guests.

There was very little in the way of merchandising or

food and beverage stalls, but paddlers found their way to local providers.

The Australian medal tally below reflects the vast improvement in the standard of racing our clubs. There was only one other club which did better than BRD - a Canadian club - 22 Dragons from Montreal, which managed 12 medals - 2 Gold, 5 Silver and 5 Bronze. Brisbane River Dragons, coached by Gary Quartermain, has had a wonderful record. They have been the Australian Champion Club for the past three years and the depth of courage from their Women's Masters Team deserves this recognition - three Gold Medals in 2000m, 200m and 500m. Well done ladies!

Queensland's newest Club Lanakila entered the Premier Women Small Boats and came home with a Bronze! What a wonderful beginning for these young women.

Congratulations must go to the clubs listed below as well as Nowra, Dragon Flyers and Hurricanes.

## AusDBF Australian Championships - March/April Canberra 2011

The Canberra Dragon Boats Association is pleased to announce its hosting of the 2011 Australian Dragon Boat Championships. The Championships will be held from 30th March through 3rd April 2011. Continue to watch for further updates, news and information!

For any further enquiries, please contact [admin@ausdbf.com.au](mailto:admin@ausdbf.com.au)



## Tampa Bay Florida August 2011

AusDBF and the Federation's High Performance Committee are in the final throes of organising selection and camp details for the Worlds campaign, and will be making an announcement on coaches, trial dates and other details by late August.

When the Auroras take on the world's best in Tampa Bay Florida next August, we will have a terrifying team that should deliver our best ever results.

Excited and enthusiastic paddlers from all around Australia have indicated interest in the national selection process, and look forward to seeing an exciting trial process get underway in just a few short months.

