

July - August 2006



Newsletter #1

Editor: Dan Curtis

Welcome to the first of many newsletters from Canberra Outrigger Canoe Club (COCC). The newsletter is for paddlers as well as people and organisations associated with Canberra OCC to keep track of what the Club is up to. Initially we plan publish every two months, though we'll have "special editions" during the racing season as required.

You're encouraged to contribute content and photos, and to suggest additional topics or sections you might think are useful. For example, Dan would like a "Letters to the Coach" section, for those with a question for the coach. Perhaps we need a "frequently asked questions" section, or somewhere to just to vent your spleen about whatever has been nagging away at the back of your mind. All suggestions welcome, though this newsletter may not be the place for all of them...!

#### Welcome to New Paddlers

Welcome to all the new paddlers who have joined us in the last few months. Nicola, Jason, Sam and John – we're glad you're keen for a paddle and we look forward to you joining us for the upcoming season. If anyone knows more people who might like to try outrigger, ask them to come down for a go. New members are always welcome at Canberra OCC.

Thanks to everyone who helped out with the CLRC Working Bee, especially new paddlers John and Rebecca.

#### Calendar

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>
Last Training before Winter break	15JUL06
AGM	10AUG06
Working Bee	12AUG06
First training of new season	19AUG06

On **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August**, from **10am to 2pm** we'll be having a **Working Bee and Season Opening BBQ**, so come on down and help us re-rig the boats, tidy the OC6 parking area and put some stickers on the boats.

#### Next Season Focus

With the recent influx of paddlers, we'll have enough to enter both Men's and Women's crews in most races next season.

If possible, Dan would like to concentrate on the Long Course races for experienced crews and use the Short Courses for new and recovering paddlers. This'll only be possible with multiple crews and/or back-up people, and for that we need to maintain our paddler numbers and recruit some more.

#### Hartley Challenge Report

Hartley Lifecare provides accommodation and life skills training for disabled people in the ACT. Their major fundraising activity each year is the Hartley Ability Cycle Challenge, a bicycle ride from Canberra to Charlotte's Pass and back, some 450 kms, over three days at the end of November. Canberra OCC has entered a team this year, to raise funds for this worthwhile charity and to raise the profile of the club and outriggering in Canberra. Canberra OCC members participating in the Challenge are undertaking training rides before our regular Saturday morning training, and other days when possible. Cycle training will continue right through until late November.

If you have ideas about how our team might be able to raise more money for Hartley, or if you'd like to ride in the Challenge or to be involved in some other way, please let Dan, Ali or one of the other riders know.

#### Paddler Profile - Dan Curtis

From Yeppoon in Queensland, Dan started Canberra OCC in 2000. Posted to England for work in 2002, Dan was unable to paddle until his return to Canberra in 2005. Even with a new baby, Dylan, coming on the scene in August 2005, he was soon back in the thick of things. During the 2005-06 season Dan took on the roles of Race Coordinator and, later, Assistant Coach.



Dan has paddled outriggers in Yeppoon with Capricorn Coast and in Townsville, as well as at regattas throughout New South Wales and while he's not Canberra OCC's most experienced paddler, he has been around the sport as long as the club has been in Canberra and is a very keen paddler. Dan's current paddling aspirations include developing his coaching skills, paddling a full NSW Zone season, going to Hamo and, eventually, paddling in an outrigger regatta in Canberra.

## Coaching and Roles in Boat

Currently Shane is the Canberra Outrigger Head Coach, assisted by Dan, Ali and Kirsty. When Shane is there, he's in charge and the coach for the session - unless he specifically asks one of the other coaches to take the session. If Shane is unavailable, the responsibility for coaching falls to the next coach.

Before, during and after paddling sessions, the coach will tell the team what they should be doing, and may talk to paddlers individually if required. Unless they're steering, the coach will always instruct the steerer on how training will take place.

As you may know, each seat in the boat has a specific role. While it's very important that every paddler knows how, and is able, to fill every role in the boat, most paddlers will tend to specialise in one or two positions. The outline below sets out the roles of each seat as we see them in Canberra OCC. (Much of this is included in the Canberra OCC paddle manual.)

**Seat 1** has the primary responsibility for setting the rhythm for the boat. Seat 1 is also responsible for helping steer during sprint turns and when required by Seat 6 (the steerer). Seat 1 and the steerer need to sort out between themselves how they will communicate if steering help is needed.

**Seat 2** is responsible for transferring the rhythm set by Seat 1 to the other side of the boat, and for calling the changes. Seat 2 may also be called on to help steer the boat – this needs to be sorted out in advance with the steerer, particularly if Seat 2 is new to the role. When the boat is stopped, Seat 2 should rest their left hand on the front iaku, ready to lean left and steady the boat as required. Seat 2 also assists with steering the bow around in sprint turns. When doing sprint turns, Seat 2 needs to manage the changes to ensure Seat 1's paddle is on the right within one to two boat lengths of the buoy.

**Seat 3** is a power seat, concentrating on staying in time with the rhythm set by Seat 1 and putting power at all times. Seat 3 is also responsible for transferring information from Seats 1 and 2 backwards and from the steerer forwards. Seats 3 and 4 are considered the "engine room" on the boat.

**Seat 4** is also a power seat, putting in powerful strokes while maintaining the pace set by Seat 1. Seat 4 is often called the "keeper of the ama", because if the boat starts to tip, they can most easily attempt a recovery by leaning left onto the forward iaku. If the boat takes on water, Seat 4 is the primary bailer. More than the other paddlers, Seat 4 will be able to see and feel water sloshing around their feet, and should be able to bail the most water in the shortest time. When the boat is stopped, Seat 4 should rest their left hand on the iaku, ready to lean left if required.

**Seat 5** is also a power seat, putting in power while maintaining the rhythm of the boat. Seat 5 may also assist the steerer as required. Seat 5 is the second bailer, helping Seat 4 if need be.

**Seat 6, the steerer**, is in charge of the boat and its steering. If the steerer is not the coach, the coach will tell the steerer what they want the boat to do and the steerer makes it happen. The steerer is responsible for the safety of the boat and crew, calling out what they want the crew to do and when.

### Coaching

When the coach is not the steerer, the coach will tell the crew what's to happen and the steerer is in charge of making it happen!

### Talking in the boat

When training, there are a limited number of reasons for talking in the boat. When not paddling, warming up or down, a small amount of muted conversation is OK in the boat. Once we have warmed up and training proper has started, the only reason for the people not listed below to talk is to provide encouragement to the rest of the boat to keep all paddlers working at optimal effort.

The coach can talk at any time, to any paddler, to provide instruction and tips. This will generally be limited as the steerer is in charge and must be able to command the boat.

The steerer can talk at any time, but usually only along the lines of giving instructions and encouragement to the crew.

Seat 2 calls the changes and helps Seat 1 with maintaining the rhythm, including when changes in pace are required. They also pass messages forward and encourage Seat 1 if things are getting difficult.

All other seats must remain quiet, unless they are passing messages or encouraging the crew.

It is a good thing to remember that there's an outrigger tradition of no swearing, negative talk or dissent in the boat. It disrespects the boat and the crew and severely reduces the effectiveness of the crew.

If you have suggestions, topics for discussion or other news, please let Dan know.