



INCC Yarra Paddlers
Annual Review
2021 – 2022



Annual General Meeting – 3rd November 2022

President – Debbie Bennett

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2022 – 2023 annual report. The year returned to a more normal pattern of paddling and racing with the worst of the Covid -19 pandemic behind us however we were then disrupted again by extraordinary weather events resulting in excessive rain and devastating floods which greatly affected many of our paddling friends at clubs locally and around the State. It's about the only time I have been thankful for our 100 stairs up from the river!

I wish to thank our wonderful committee members who have guided the club this year. Sadly, Anthony and Marcus left the committee during the year due to other pressures on their time, however, their fresh ideas and contribution were most welcome whilst they were available. Jason was a welcome new committee member this year and his accounting expertise has been a great asset to the club.

I also wish to recognise retiring committee member Sally Miller. Sally has contributed an enormous amount of time, effort, and energy to her roles. She created and organised the Sunday social paddles, and managed the Come & Try Days, weekends away, races and much more. I don't know what we will do without her. I also want to give special thanks to Vice President Candice who I have frequently relied on for advice and wise council. Her strategic thinking, political savvy and IT expertise have been invaluable to me. We should all be grateful for Candice's persistence to achieve clubhouse re development and the many, many hours she spends on membership administration.

It's been great to work with a dedicated group of paddlers who care about the direction and development of the club. Together we have kept the club functioning well and enjoyed working harmoniously together on many projects.

- Vice President, Membership & Racking Coordinator – Candice Charles
- Secretary – Arabella Eyre
- Treasurer – Jason Kennedy
- Communications & Race Participation Coordinator – Penny Young
- Social/Events Coordinator – Sally Miller
- Coaching Coordinator – Rachel De Kretser
- Club House Coordinator & Boat Captain - Lawrie Chenoweth
- Safety Coordinator – Anthony Cross
- Recreational Paddling Coordinator - Marcus Rosetto

I also wish to thank the many other club members who contribute significantly to the administration and development of the sport including those who are on State discipline committees. In recognition of his volunteer contribution to Victorian Marathon John Young received a *Services to Paddling Award*

at the 2022 Paddle Australia Awards. He and Reka Abraham were also both nominated for a Paddle Victoria volunteer award. Congratulations.

Thanks, are also extended to our coaches and the organisers of our less formal training groups who provide instruction and motivation for us all to improve our paddling. I hope that all members have been able to utilise the club facilities to enjoy time out on the river, meet new friends and revitalise.

Here is the progress we made on the goals we set this year.

- *Improved clubhouse facilities*

This is ongoing as outlined below, riddled with setbacks and frustrations but still moving forward.

- *Improved communication to members and the wider community*

I hope you have enjoyed our newsletters (contributions always welcome), which endeavour to keep everyone up to date with activities along with regular posts on Facebook and the old school noticeboard.

- *The creation of a more comprehensive coaching and squad structure*

Our emphasis has been on the junior squads which have been ably managed by Chris Burns. The kids have been participating in more races as they gain experience and confidence. They have also been provided with more age-appropriate equipment.

Our regular Tuesday/Thursday squad continued to train hard with some members making the Australian Marathon Team and competing at World Championships.

After five years as President, it is time for me to hand over the reins. I have enjoyed my time in the role but believe that new people bring new ideas and energy to the club. I will be staying on the committee (if elected) and will continue to contribute to the ongoing success of our wonderful club. Thanks to every member who has contributed in any way to making this a very successful year.

Membership & Racking Coordinator – Candice Charles

Membership remained high in the 2021-22 year at 340 (118 juniors, 222 adults), with an even gender split. Many of our new members over the last two years have completed the learn-to-paddle course prior to joining. This ensures they have good basic skills to build on and some ready-made connections with others new to the sport.

Demand for private boat racks remained steady with few or none on the waiting list through the year.

Communications & Race Participation Coordinator – Penny Young

Our members have taken part in downriver, slalom, ocean racing, sprint and marathon events this year

Over 60 INCC Yarra Paddlers took part in the PV School Championships in March this year. We also had 25 paddlers race singles and 54 race doubles at the PV Marathon Championships, and 10 at the PV Sprint Champs. These events were followed by the respective Australian Championships, in which 12 members took part for Marathon and 7 for Sprint.

The PV Marathon series continued throughout the year, with events at Tay Creggan, a twilight race at Essendon and the inaugural PV recreational camp at Bairnsdale. Unfortunately, some other events had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

Congratulations must go to our members who were selected for the Australian Marathon Team, which competed at the ICF Marathon World Championships in Portugal.

- Emilie Harrison was selected in the C1 Open Women and placed 16th.
- Rachel de Kretser was selected in K1 U23 Women, placing 18th.
- John Young and Dominic Scarfe were part of the Masters team, placing 17th and 16th in their events respectively.

As we look forward to the end of the year, it looks as though many of the traditional big events will not be able to go ahead as scheduled, however the Massive Murray Paddle already has new dates set and other events may follow suit or be adapted. However, as things progress, I am sure there will be INCC Yarra Paddlers ready and waiting to take up the challenges offered.

Social/Events Coordinator – Sally Miller

The year commenced with an adult Come & Try day in January. This was followed by a Junior Come & Try in October. Both events were well patronised and resulted in new club memberships and enrolments in our junior squads.

Five Sunday Social Paddles were held this year. Following member feedback, the format was modified to remove the competitive and double components to make them more friendly. This has resulted in a more relaxed approach with the emphasis on social interaction and the food that follows rather than a challenging paddle.

The annual Paddle to the City was held in March with 10 paddlers enjoying the day. It was great to see some members achieve their first long paddle.

The club was scheduled to host a race at Lake Nagambie in July and all the arrangements were in place. Unfortunately, the race had to be cancelled due to predicted thunderstorms. Lightning does not mix well with paddling!

In October several members joined in the Paddle Vic Marathon weekend based in Bairnsdale. Paddlers enjoyed meeting people from other clubs and paddling on the Mitchell and Nicholson Rivers.

Let us know if you have ideas for other on or off water activities.

Adult Learn to Paddle Coordinator – Rachel De Kretser

The Adult Learn to Paddle courses were very popular again this year with just over 100 people participating in the group (usually 8 people and 2 coaches), 2:1 or 1:1 format. Ages ranged from 15 to 73, with almost all participants living in the City of Yarra or adjoining suburbs.

2021-22 enrolments in the course were up 20% on the record high number of the previous year, so it is clear that there is strong interest in the sport and demand for the program.

Thanks to all our wonderful coaches who provided the guidance to our participants through the courses and for their friendly support of new members.

Junior Program Manager / Head Coach – Chris Burns

The Junior Programs began strongly with 31 kids paddling in Term 4 2021. We currently have 36 enrolled which reflects good retention and recruitment. The aim of getting paddlers to start racing was achieved with all the January holiday program kids and two others racing at state sprints, where they won with 5 state team nominations in K1 and K2, and 17 medals overall.

During the Term 1 2022 we had the Vic Schools Championships and the Vic State Marathon Championships. Four medals were won by Yarra Paddlers at the Schools Championships and 4 medals at the State Marathon Championships.

Other highlights included.

- A large squad attending the Bendigo Short Course championships and ready-to-race clinics where we received a medal in every class we entered.
- Six paddlers competing in the Paddle Australia Sprint Championships in South Australia.

There is no doubt that the Junior program will continue to build and create some fantastic paddlers.

Boat Captain – Lawrie Chenoweth

There have been 21 boat repairs throughout the year mostly on K1, TK1 and TK2's. There are still some K2s on the to do repair list.

We also have a good number of new boats. More K2s and K1s are due to arrive in the next few weeks to support the junior program. Six new junior sized paddles have already been delivered in September and six new senior sized paddles will arrive in the first week of November. We also have a Nelo Slider on order.

I remind all club members to treat the boats with care, particularly when paddling after heavy rain when submerged debris can cause damage to boats.

Clubhouse Coordinator – Lawrie Chenoweth

Many repairs and a good deal of council maintenance has been carried out this year. The most frequent problems were the flood prone men's shower area, closely followed by the flooding down in the Bunker changerooms. I have been in regular contact with Trent at the council, and he has been very responsive to all our needs.

The possums are still in residence; however, they seem to be less in numbers recently and the new cleaners have done a great job in reducing the possum evidence trail.

It was great to see a good turnout of members at the working bee and lots of great jobs were achieved. The Shed of Shame (the green shed which houses boats that are no longer used) has been cleared out to home some boats to support the new Carey Grammar squad arriving in the new year.

The trailers have both been serviced and are ready to go. The large trailer is stored at Westerfolds Park, and our small trailer is now under cover at the top of the bunker behind the clubhouse. We are getting the small trailer serviced again, replacing the dodgy jockey wheel with a new more friendly version as well as a new set of lighting leads to suit all vehicles.

Last thing of all, there is a great supply of toilet paper in the committee room when required!

Clubhouse Development - Debbie Bennett & Candice Charles

The PRG (Project Reference Group) for the redevelopment project met several times during the year however progress has been frustrating slow. The group consists of Debbie, Candice and two council officers. Thanks to Candice's persistence we had more senior officers at our last meeting which we hope has reignited our relationship with council and their engagement in our project.

Yarra Council is currently investigating the feasibility of building a boat storage shed on the area between the bridge and the amphitheatre which would improve the transfer of boats to and from the river. Council has engaged an engineering consultant to prepare a feasibility study and concept design for the boat store in the proposed riverbank location. It is critical to determine if the boat store can go ahead in that location before an architect is engaged and briefed on the Panther Pavilion (the old clubhouse) redevelopment. We have emphasised that we need an integrated approach to the design to link boat storage, change rooms and recreational facilities. We also need to be mindful of other park users and adopt a holistic approach to work around the many and varied people who use the area.

Safety Coordinator – Anthony Cross

Thanks to Anthony's expertise our first aid supplies were audited and topped up and a portable kit prepared for use at events and races. Our junior coaches have also been supplied with small kits to use on the river to cater for on the spot emergencies.

Members are reminded that we have a defib unit located on the wall near the sign in book and it would be advantageous for everyone to familiarise themselves with how to use it.

Recreational Paddling Coordinator - Marcus Rosetto

It was wonderful to welcome Marcus to the committee this year. He came with great skills to help design our marketing material and ideas for recreational paddlers. As mentioned previously all members have had disruptions to their paddling however Marcus managed to create the Twilight Recreational Paddles which were enjoyed by many. He also helped organise the annual Paddle to the City and Sunday Social Paddles. We hope to reinstate the twilight paddles when the river gets back to its normal self.

Debbie Bennett

President

INCC Yarra Paddlers