

**AUSTRALIAN OUTRIGGER CANOE RACING ASSOCIATION
SOUTH QLD BRANCH INC**

(Incorporation No. A34433)



**PADDLERS MEETING : Held at Coff's Harbour Yacht
Club: NATIONALS**

PRESENT: Brad Martin: Vice President SQ Branch, Jane Wilson Secretary SQ, Ian Wilson, committee SQ, Mike Mills-Thom: committee SQ, Coffs Coast , Phil Benstead: Noosa, Ron Grabbe: Mooloolaba, Tony Kimlin: Outrigger Australia, Wendy Kropp: Brisbane, Greg Watson: Northcliffe, Bob McGuyren: Tweed Coast, Trish Johnston :President AOCRA.

APOLOGIES: Carol Daly: River City

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- 1. 2007/08 SQ OC6 REGATTA SEASON**
- 2. NATIONALS**
- 3. OC1/2 SERIES**

2007/08 SQ REGATTA SEASON:

- **Regattas MUST be a minimum of 3-4 weeks apart** to allow time for effective training schedules and timely nominations .
- **Mooloolaba and Outrigger OCC spoke heavily in favour of season March-September.** This allows for training through to international events such as Molokai, and also will attract Surf Life Savers who have finished their season.
- **Other reps in favour of earlier start to season, say September-April or May.**
- New paddlers are easy to attract in the lead up to summer, and to also retain them during the warmer months. Many clubs have their 'come and try' days as the weather warms up for both junior and seniors.
- Social paddlers are important contributors to many clubs, and will not paddle in winter
- Junior paddlers are also easy to attract because kids enjoy paddling in the sun! Many juniors also play netball and football, leading to a large decline in numbers beginning in March/April.
- Club reps confirm that paddler numbers are currently dropping due to the cooler weather.

- Many senior paddlers prefer training in daylight, in early hours of the morning, and are opposed to training in the dark after work, or when it is cold.
- Paddling is a summer beach sport!!

Suggestion that regatta season starts with regattas in September, October, November and early December with a Christmas break, until the Skins event in mid-January, to be hosted by Mooloolaba, which will kick start the second part of the regatta calendar.

Acknowledged that season hinges on Nationals date. Agreed that Nationals ideally to be the same date every year to aid in planning for paddlers, and the event co-ordinators, with the event remaining in the same place for 2-3 years to allow maximal capitalisation of infrastructure and sponsorship. Trish Johnston (President AOCRA) will be meeting with Hamilton Island event co-ordinators to discuss forward planning for both events.

Non-Attendance of Paddlers to Nationals:

1. Too close to Hamilton Island Cup.
2. Venue:
 - Distance for some paddlers to travel. No venue will please everybody. Financial sense to have venue where most paddler support is.
 - Difficulty with transporting of OC6 canoes. Ian has suggested that each zone levy all paddlers, say, \$1 each on top of every race nomination fee. This money is then held solely for the purpose of transporting canoes to Nationals.

It was agreed that **ALL paddlers** need to have input into the question regarding the start and finish of the 2007/08 regatta season. Jane will have a "tick sheet" present at Noosa regatta. **ALL paddlers** are strongly recommended to tick a preference for the start of the next season to enable SQ Committee to create a season in conjunction with the majority of paddlers wishes.

OC1/2 Season:

It was agreed by all ... "if it's not broke, don't fix it"!... Therefore the season remains the same, starting August-January, with Titles held on January 26th long weekend. Mike Mills-Thom remains keen to host the titles again in Coffs Harbour, as it is a central venue for many regular OC1 competitors.

Many thanks to those paddlers who attended to give insight into our discussion topics. All comments were relevant and many constructive ideas were tabled. We also thank Trish Johnston for her attendance and contribution to the discussion.