

2023-2024 Paddle WA Marathon Annual Report

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2022-2023 Paddle WA Marathon Report

1. Introduction

PWA Marathon held the planned schedule of eight marathons and two championship events during the 2023-2024 season.

Numbers were down on the previous year. Nearly all the racing was conducted without paddling incidents.

There was good attendance by WA at the 2024 Marathon Nationals and WA was well represented in the medal tally.

The race records were updated and posted.

Data for annual awards was compiled and the awards were presented at the dinner in mid-June.

2. Schedule of Events

The schedule of events for 2023-2024 was as follows, the events in **pink** were managed by PWA Marathon:

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2023-2024 Marathon Events			
Date	Event	Organiser	Starting Point
16-Sep-23	IOP #1 Swanboume to Sorrento	IOP	Swanboume
24-Sep-23	Sprint Regatta #1	Sprint	Champion Lakes
7-Oct-23	IOP #2 Swanboume to Sorrento	IOP	Swanboume
8-Oct-23	Classic Paddle	Paddle WA	Deep Water Pt, Mt Pleasant
15-Oct-23	Marathon # 1 -- Island to Island	Marathon	AKC
21-Oct-23	IOP #3 Dutch Inn to Sorrento	IOP	Dutch Inn
21-Oct-23	Sprint Regatta #2	Sprint	Bayswater
29-Oct-23	Bevan Dashwood Dash	Slalom	Kent St Weir
4-Nov-23	IOP #4 Port to Sorrento	IOP	Port Beach
5-Nov-23	Marathon # 2 -- Moore River	Marathon	Moore River, Guilderton
5-Nov-23	Mixed Doubles Championships	Marathon	Moore River, Guilderton
11-Nov-23	The Mandurah Cut Run	MOC	Mandurah
16-Nov-23	Sunset Series #1	COPSLC	Sandtracks
18-Nov-23	Sprint Regatta #3 [Afternoon]	Sprint	Champion Lakes
18-Nov-23	Fenn W Coast DW & Start Ocean Race V	IOP	TBD
21-Nov-23	Sunset Series #2	COPSLC	Sandtracks
23-Nov-23	Sunset Series #3	COPSLC	Sandtracks
25-Nov-23	The Doctor	PA Ocean Paddler	Rottnest to Sorrento
26-Nov-23	Pairs Enduro	Ascot Kayak Club	Middle Swan Bridge
3-Dec-23	Ocean World Championships	Paddle Australia	Port Beach to Sorrento
10-Dec-23	Marathon # 3 Canning River Race	Marathon	Deep Wtr Pt, Mt Pleasant
16-Dec-23	Battle on the Bay	Geographe Bay	Busselton YC
16-Dec-23	IOP #5 TBD	IOP	TBD
7-Jan-24	Marathon #4 Convicts Fence	Marathon	Shelley Foreshore
13-Jan-24	Sprint Regatta #4	Sprint	Champion Lakes
13-Jan-23	IOP Oceanbuilt Gage Roads	IOP	Gage Roads
21-Jan-24	Marathon #5 Mandurah Canals	Marathon	Mandurah
3-Feb-24	Sprint State Championships	Sprint	Champion Lakes
4-Feb-24	Sprint State Championships	Sprint	Champion Lakes
11-Feb-24	Marathon #6 Pinjarra	Marathon	Pinjarra, Henry St
17-Feb-24	Drummers Handicap	Drummers	Port to City
24-Feb-24	Rottnest Swim	RCS	Ocean
24-Feb-24	City Lights Long Distance	AKC / CRCC	Shelley Foreshore
4-Mar-24	Labour Day	Everyone	Home
10-Mar-24	Rod Fry Memorial Race	Swan Canoe Club	Swan Canoe Club
23-Mar-24	WA Cnoe Mara Chmps "States"	Marathon	Sandy Beach
24-Mar-24	WA Cnoe Mara Chmps "States"	Marathon	Sandy Beach
31-Mar-24	Easter Sunday	Everyone	Home
5-Apr-24	Aus Cnoe Mara Chmps "NtnIs"	Paddle Australia	Encounter Lakes, S Aus
6-Apr-24	Aus Cnoe Mara Chmps "NtnIs"	Paddle Australia	Encounter Lakes, S Aus
7-Apr-24	Aus Cnoe Mara Chmps "NtnIs"	Paddle Australia	Encounter Lakes, S Aus
21-Apr-24	Canning Classic	Canning	Shelley Sailing Club
28-Apr-24	John Sims Race	Ascot Kayak Club	AKC
12-May-24	Mother's Day	Dad	Home
11-May-24	Marathon #7 -- Double Barkers	Marathon	AKC
26-May-24	Ramon Challenge	Paddle WA	Bayswater
3-Jun-24	WA Foundation Day	Everyone	Home
16-Jun-24	Marathon #8 Upper Swan Race	Marathon	Middle Swan Bdrge
14-Jul-24	Northam to Toodyay	Paddle WA	Northam
26-Jul-24	Avon Scrutineering Afternoon	NADA	Ascot Kayak Club
28-Jul-24	Walyunga to Middle Swan	NADA/WW	Avon River
10-Aug-24	Avon Descent	NADA	Northam
11-Aug-24	Avon Descent	NADA	Cobblers Pool
1-Sep-24	Father's Day	Mum	Home
7-Sep-24	Nanga Challenge	Ascot Kayak Club	Murray River, Dwellingup
15-Sep-24	Canning Bridges Race	Canning	Shelley Sailing Club
23-Sep-24	King's Birthday	Everyone	Home

2. Season Review

#1 Island to Island:

The race ran smoothly.

#2 Moore River:

The intro from the Guilderton local was nice and is still something to try to establish at Mandurah and Pinjarra. The burger at the local café was popular. Splitting the Mixed Doubles into two categories: Open and Masters and awarding medals for each worked well.

#3 Canning River Race:

The race was held on a very low-tide day and had to be shortened. It was surprising how many entries there were considering but numbers were down. The water level was lower than acceptable for a viable canoe marathon race.

Recommendation for the Future:

Exchange this race for a new race "The East Perth Paddler"

#4 Convicts Fence:

The race was enjoyed by all and will now become the regular Canning River slot on the schedule. Paddlers enjoyed the course, the portage and the convenience of the proximity of the car park and the toilets. The yacht club and City of Canning were good to deal with.

Recommendation on Future of Convicts Fence: Modify the non-portage and short courses to avoid cross-over if possible

#5 Mandurah Canals:

The race proceeded without incident. An attempt was made to have David Templeman, WA Minister of Sport and MLA for Mandurah, attend the event and that will be repeated next year. The Mandurah Over 55s did an excellent job, yet again, of ensuring course compliance.

#6 State Marathon Championships:

The event proceeded smoothly. More people got food than would have from a food truck. Scheduling SUPs, Short & Juniors for after the main event worked well but the numbers were low in all three. Medals were awarded to everyone on the podium which worked well.

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Provision of burgers from Swan Café, warmed up on the barbecue seemed to work well. Plunger coffee was also provided and proved popular. The trestle tables got melted as a result, there needs to be a plan to avoid that in future.

#7 Pinjarra:

Proceeded without incident but numbers were down owing to Sprint Nationals the previous weekend and high temperatures. Two paddlers suffered from heat stroke. The race was conducted within PA heat guideline boundaries.

Recommendation for Future: Have fluid, electrolyte, ice and cold packs available for races on hot days.

#8 Double Barkers:

Was held on a Saturday again, this time in the afternoon [to fit in with Mother's Day the next day and to fit in with the busy schedule at Ascot on Saturday mornings] but that did not appear to have any detrimental effect. The race was only a little bit lower on numbers and proceeded without incident. Paddlers said they enjoyed the afternoon event.

Recommendation Saturday Races:

Races be held on a Saturday if need be but not as a matter of course.

#9 Upper Swan:

The main race proceeded without serious incident and was well attended. The format of the race being raced in order of Div speed appeared to function well. The guppy and Short-short were held at Ascot again to make them easier to administer. They were not very well attended.

3. 2024 Marathon Nationals, Victor Harbour, S Australia

The event was very well organised and enjoyable. Up until 2019, it was a two-day event, this was a three day event with the addition of SUPs, Short Course, and Mixed Doubles.

The Marathons were held on the Friday, the Doubles on the Saturday and the Mixed Doubles and Short Course on the Saturday.

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WA took 24 kayakers and 4 SUP paddlers. The WA medal tally for the kayakers was: 12 Gold, 11 Silver & 4 Bronze. The 4 SUP paddlers received 3 Gold, 3 Silver & 3 Bronze. Josh Kippin received the Australian Marathon Paddler of the Year Award.

This table shows the specifics of the medals the WA paddlers received:

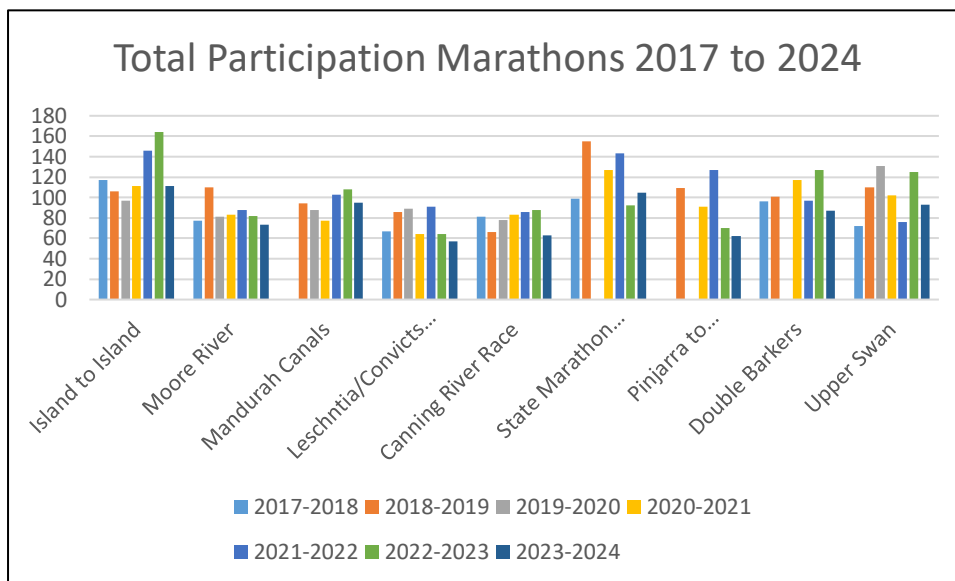
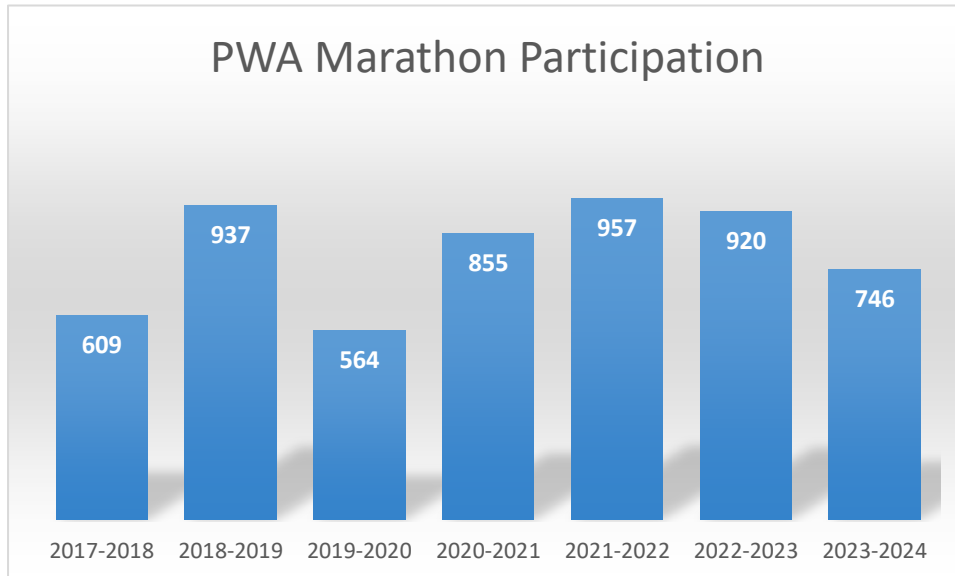
WA Medals at 2024 Marathon Nationals			
K1 Marathon:		Short Course:	
Brett McDonald	🥈	Judy Darbyshire	🥇
Jade Lane	🥈	Dave Berglund	🥇
Kelby Murray	🥉	Kelby Murray	🥈
Darryl Long	🥉	Brett McDonald	🥈
Francis Nolan	🥈	Jade Lane	🥈
Dave Berglund	🥇	Josh Kippin	🥇
Terry Bolland	🥉		
Judy Darbyshire	🥇	SUP Marathon:	
Josh Kippin	🥇	Terry Bolland	🥈
Connor Jacob	🥇	Darren Pratt	🥈
Stephan Weyers	🥈	Derek Cross	🥈
Mitch Tamblin	🥉	Tashka Goswell	🥉
Genevieve Stanley	🥈		
		SUP Technical:	
K2 Marathon:		Terry Bolland	🥇
Brett McDonald / Brett Greenwood	🥇	Darren Pratt	🥇
Dave Berglund / Terry Bolland	🥇	Derek Cross	🥈
Peter Martin / Doug Hodson	🥈	Tashka Goswell	🥉
Josh Kippin / Casey Haynes	🥇		
Genevieve Stanley / Rachel Dekretser	🥈	SUP Sprint:	
Connor Jacob / Bradely Buissink	🥇	Terry Bolland	🥇
		Darren Pratt	🥇
Mixed Doubles:		Derek Cross	🥈
Brett & Julie McDonald	🥇	Tashka Goswell	🥉
Peter & Judy	🥇		
Connor Jacob / Anthea Tan	🥈		

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4. Participation 2022-2023 Season:

See three sets of charts below:

- Overall Participation in WA Marathon, Past Five Years



- Short Course Participation, Past Seven Years

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Analysis:

Overall numbers for the season were down by almost 20%. There were a number of reasons: the schedule had been compressed to give more time for Wildwater and Slalom from May onwards, the result was a lot of marathons close together and in the holiday season. Junior numbers were down, information on competing events [e.g. Ocean and Sprint] was more readily available and the late rain and consequent late arrival of water in the Avon River resulted in less enthusiasm for the long races at the end of the season.

The schedule is being rejigged as much as it can be [Double Barkers separated from John Sims by four weeks], there will be a new race to replace The Canning River Race which too often has low water levels. Modification of the Double Barkers course to make it more interesting is under discussion.

Island to Island was down and back to the numbers that were typical three years ago. Moore River and Mandurah Canals were OK. Convicts Fence is popular with the paddlers who paddle it but it is very soon after Christmas. The Canning River Race can now be taken off the schedule as Convicts Fence has become a good Canning River alternative. The proposed alternative to the Canning River Race is the East Perth Paddler which will run from Banks Reserve and will go into Claisebrook Cove, up to Heirisson Bridge and back to and round the mark at Belmont water ski area.

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State Championships attendance was down from two years ago but it is expected it will jump back up in 2025 with the Nationals being held only two weeks later. It is proposed that it is held on the same course. Pinjarra numbers were down probably because it was earlier than normal and soon after other marathons. It was also very hot. Double Barkers was held on a Saturday afternoon to avoid Mothers' Day and the busy Saturday morning schedule at Ascot, numbers were down. It will be held later this season to give a gap between John Sims and it and also to give a gradual increase in race distance from John Sims through the Ramon and on to Double Barkers and Upper Swan. A course change for Double Barkers is under discussion. Upper Swan numbers were good, particularly as it had been bolstered by outriggers and SUPs in recent years and, this year, there were almost none.

The Short Courses are not proving to be big crowd pullers apart from at Double Barkers and Upper Swan.

Junior numbers are down. The proposal from PWA for a junior training initiative by the name of Paddle Squad is very welcome. PWA Marathon have extended an offer of assistance to this initiatives and to the clubs in any efforts they may be working on to enhance junior numbers.

5. Marathon Committee

Management of the 2023-2024 season was conducted with the help of an excellent committee:

- Warren Southwell [Bosun: Boats]
- John Hilton
- Rosalie Evans
- Joe Dowse
- Terry Bolland
- Martin Watson
- Lilly Farrell

The success of the season owes big thanks to this group for their contribution both in terms of work and good counsel for the decisions that had to be made from time to time.

6. Documentation & Facilities Upgrades:

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Race Records:

The Marathon race records are all up to date. A big debt of gratitude goes to Martin Watson for the completion of this major and very necessary work. The records are now all posted on the Marathon Web Page

<https://www.paddlewa.asn.au/marathon/>

Change to Awards Policy:

It is established that paddlers have to paddle at least two races in any category to win Paddler of the Year. This worked well for this year's series.

7. Support Boats

The boats performed well throughout the season. The discipline was able to provide the level of paddler support, with boats, that is reflected in the Marathon Risk Register on the web page.

Huge thanks go to Warren Southwell for tireless work with management and transport of the boats during this season.

8. Volunteers

Marathon events are fortunate to be supportive by enthusiastic, competent, hard-working, reliable volunteers.

The events of this season all ran smoothly. The group of volunteers tended to be based on the same nucleus of people for every event.

Thanks, in particular go to:

- Race Directors: John Hilton, Warren Southwell
- Timers: Trina Farrell, Peter Douglas, Martin Watson, Geraint Maddison
- Starters: Trina Farrell & Peter Douglas
- Check Points: Martin Watson, Pat Tullock
- Creating & Maintaining Awards Calculator: Ray Smith
- Updating Records and Results: Martin Watson
- Support Boat Management: Warren Southwell

The search for new volunteers will continue in the hope of expanding the group so as to not have to rely on the same small group of people giving up of their time as frequently as they do at present. All marathon paddlers are invited to lend assistance and to learn about the details of some of the more intricate roles.

9. Development of Marathon Paddlers:

2024 has seen a high level of activity in development of Marathon paddling. There are now three groups at Ascot:

Thursday Evening Beginners [Isabel Combe]:

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There is renewed energy in this group, numbers are building and paddlers have been graduating to the Tuesday group.

Tuesday Progressive Racing Group [Terry Bolland]:

This is very popular and has been excellent for introducing many intermediate paddlers to marathon racing.

Endurance Academy [Coran Longwood]:

This was established very late in 2023. The training takes place early in the morning, most days of the week. It involves a level of sport science which participants can use to manage and monitor their progress with timing devices. It has attracted good numbers and has become a community in itself. Many of the members have seen significant improvement in their performance.

10.Consultancy

A Webscorer course was presented in mid January. It was well attended [approx. 15]. There are now a few more people in the system who can do Registrations, Start Lists and Results posts.

Paddle WA Marathon provided consultancy for a number of club races during the 2022-2024 season:

- Ascot City Lights: Marketing
- Swan Canoe Club: Webscorer for Rod Fry
- Canning Canoe Club: Webscorer work

11.Financial

Balance of funds Marathon "Account" May 31st 2024: \$ 35,891.00, almost \$3000 up on the balance at the end of the previous season.

12.2025 Marathon Nationals Planning

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Project Management General

Finalise Date & Schedule:

The event schedule is agreed as 11th to 13th April, Friday to Sunday with Briefings and the Event Opening on the Thursday. SUP marathon will probably be on Thursday afternoon.

Session Schedule:

Been considered in detail almost ready to go into registration.

SUPs:

Discussion about inclusion of SUPs. Decision will be based on number of entrants and number of states represented. Thresholds yet to be agreed.

Approval City of Belmont:

Application submitted working on relaxation of \$10k park fee.

Approval DOT:

Application submitted

Sponsorship:

Package prepared and sent to major businesses in Perth, no positive responses. Will proceed with smaller businesses for smaller contributions.

Grants:

Have applied to Dept of Local Gov [formerly Sport & Rec], response was positive, will hear in November. Preparing applications for City of Belmont, Perth Airport, and WA State Health Dept.

On Water Planning & Support

Course:

Updated to improve spectator appeal. Short course being prepared

Portage:

The ramps to be done with scaffolding, secured lower cost provider from within the paddling world.

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Event Management Support

Official Training:

Nine WA paddlers have been trained by Sue O'Rourke of PaddleVic

Communication & Marketing:

Marketing Activity Coordinator [Leanne Hampson of Paddle WA] will have guidebook on a web page in November.

Finance:

Finance Coordinator, Martin has compiled draft budget. Plan is to submit Version #1 by end of September.

Race Registration

Will start work once session schedule has been finalised and to issue it at the end of November.

Merchandise:

Have approved logo. Local business are working up designs for a long sleeve tee shirt and a hoody [see attached] to include in registration

HSE

Work has commenced on updating the HSE Plan & Risk Register from 2019 in Q3 2024.

Location Administration:

Paddlers' Compound, On-site Facilities:

The location plan been presented to City of Belmont. It includes a fenced paddlers' compound, changing tents and temporary toilets. See attached.

Catering:

Swan Café to double capacity for duration of event and to supplement with additional coffee and, possibly, gelato.

Signage & Vendors:

Nothing to report

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On-water Support:

Photography:

Photographer selected

Radios:

Will be hired from OCP sales. May install repeater

Support Boats, Team Boats, Juniors, Volunteers, PA, Boat Weighing:

Nothing to report

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13.Paddler of the Year Standings 2024:

PWA 2024 Marathon Paddler of the Year		
Age Group	Gender	Name
Singles		
U10	Female	Ellie Lane
U10	Male	William Lane
U12	Female	Caitlin Thurgate
U14	Male	Orlando Fonseca
U16	Male	Connor Jacob
U23	Female	Lily Farrell
U23	Male	Stephan Weyers
Open	Female	Bronwyn Martin
Open	Male	Coran Longwood
35+	Female	Jill Roberts
35+	Male	Ben Carrick
45+	Female	Isabel Combe
45+	Male	Garth Civil
55+	Female	Erica Mcknight
55+	Male	Tim Cornish
65+	Male	David Berglund
70+	Female	Judy Darbyshire
70+	Male	Peter Pawlow
Doubles		
Masters	Female/Male	Isabel Combe / Ray E Smith
Masters	Male	Brett McDonald / Peter Tomczak
Overall		
Overall	Female	Lily Farrell
Overall	Male	David Berglund

14. Summary Comments and Focus for 2023-2024 Season

The 2023-2024 Paddle WA Marathon season saw a drop-off in participation by almost 20%. The reasons were a combination of a compressed schedule, low water in the Canning River, competing events and late arrival of the rains to fill the Avon River at the tail end.

It is expected the 2025 Marathon Nationals to be held in Perth will boost numbers for the upcoming season. In addition, the replacement of the Canning River Race with the East Perth Paddler and the rejig of the tail-end of the season should bring improvements.

There was a strong contingent of paddlers at the Marathon Nationals in Victor Harbour, S Australia. WA won an impressive proportion of the medals.

Development of Marathon paddling has seen significant improvements with ongoing work by the Ascot Thursday and Tuesday [Progressive Racing] groups and, in particular, with the Endurance Academy which has attracted good numbers and is delivering impressive results.

The Paddle WA Marathon race records continue to be updated and posted on the Web Page. The awards system was reviewed and updated.

The support boats performed well throughout the season.

The focus for 2024-2025 will be to continue to try to grow the sport mostly through activities that will lead to increased participation in the Marathon Nationals in April.

Thanks go to Paddle WA, the committee and the volunteers for the excellent support during the year.