

Wetlands Wander 2024 Race Wrap

In the early hours of Sunday morning 26th May, volunteers from Sandgate Paddling Club prepared to host the 27th Annual Wetlands Wander 2024. The WW race was first held on the 18th of July 1996. The event draws a wide range of competitors, from all over Southeast Queensland, who test their mettle in the safe, beautiful reaches of Nundah and Cabbage Tree Creek.

The Wetlands Wander attracts a variety of craft which this year included single and double K's, TK's, ocean skis, SUP, canoes, and outriggers.

In its traditional format, the Wetlands Wander consists of a 5km loop course which winds through the Boondall Wetlands. Paddlers can choose to compete over 5km, 10km or 15km distances within their age and craft divisions.

Wetlands Wander day is always great here – it's when we really get together as a Club. It was fantastic to have the support of volunteers from our new Pathways to Racing team, Sea kayakers, Creekies and the fitness squad.

On water Safety was provided by Maritime Safety Qld and Volunteer Marine Rescue Brisbane. This was MSQ's first year in assisting the Club with boat traffic control by advising Maritime rules and regulations of on water Marine and speed zones. This enhanced our safety and reduced a lot of incidents of power boat and jet skis speeding in the creeks. VMR Crew assisted with water safety. Thanks to Paul and crew who liaised with our course safety officer Chris Girdler, who coordinated VMR, MSQ and safety from our Club volunteers on Skis Matt, Andrew, Brett, and Neville assisted in his Sea Kayak. Thanks also to Simon, Ester Arnold and Jenny who put out all the turn buoys and lane dividers and safety marshals. I have to say from a race coordinator's point of view this made for a very stress-free day for safety.

This year, our Wetland Wander was race three of what is the Pacific Coast Marathon Championships (PCMC). The PCMC series is led by Scott Sharples from Paddle Qld. Scott kindly gave up his Sunday to be on hand, assisting us where required.

As usual, and I'm sure you'd agree our race was the 'Best RACE Ever', as all the coordinators before would say and this was again confirmed by Facebook and email messages to our Club, after the Event.

Congratulations to the winners:

5km – 1st Rick Fullarton (29:25), 2nd and 1st lady Heidi Smith (29:53) and 3rd Brendon Carroll (29:57)

10km – 1st Gavin Cook (52:57), 2nd Euan Gordon (54:05) 3rd Diane Woods/Grant Epple (54:41) and 1st lady Neiva Wright (56:52)

15km – 1st Andrew Bavage (1:11:31), 2nd Byron Dieckmann (1:11:33) and 3rd Archie Skinner (1:11:55). 1st Lady was Sandra Van Zyl (1:29:38)

Kimberley Cup 10km winner for 2024- Helyn Kellermeier (CCPC).

A big **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers that helped make our event possible and all the competitors and families for their support.

A special thanks goes too.

VMR Brisbane with on water safety <https://www.facebook.com/VMRBrisbane>

MSQ with on water boat compliance <https://www.facebook.com/MaritimeSafetyQld>

and **Simon Arnold** for providing a boat, fuel, and crew to assist with safety and deploying and retrieving buoys.

A big shout out to all who have generously supplied donations for this event:

Isle 5 Photography by Glen Eaton <https://www.facebook.com/Aisle5Photography>

Chris Girdler for some lovely relaxation hampers.

The Wired Owl Coffee Co. Sandgate donation of a \$50 coffee voucher
<https://wiredowlcoffee.com.au/>

Noosa Paddle Sports donation of 3 PFDs, big shout out to Andy Ross!
<https://noosapaddlesports.com.au/>

Chris Hurley encouragement award of \$100 donation divided up towards Junior paddler prizes.

Hon Anika Wells MP <https://www.anikawells.com.au/>

Councilor Jared Cassidy <https://jaredcassidy.com.au/>

Hon Sterling Hinchcliffe MP <https://stirlinghinchcliffe.com/>

Glen from Aisle 5 Photography has provided a small sample of 35 photos from over 1200 images that he has taken off from today's Wetlands Wander 2024. If you would like to purchase any photos, please email glen@aisle5.com.au or contact him via Facebook.

Wetlands Wander 2024 Race Results are up on Webscorer:
<https://www.webscorer.com/race?raceid=353354>





