

## February "Women on Whitewater" Trip Report

Where – Hadspen South Esk Lions Park

When – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015

Number of participants – 50 (including 40 women and 10 leaders)

Grade – flat water 'come and try' day



I am very excited to report that 40 women, mostly beginners, came along for a come and try day held at Hadspen river. It was a turnout well above what I expected! There were lots of smiles and heaps of laughter. Everyone really enjoyed themselves and by the end of the day everyone was feeling more comfortable on the flat water.

The event was developed last year by the committee to try and get more female club members. The event was advertised on Facebook, in the Examiner and on ABC radio. I also put a couple of posters up around

town. The day offered sessions for beginners and those who wanted to improve their kayaking skills. We had some excellent trip leaders: Luke, Hippy, Victor, Claye, Sam, Millie, Paul, Katherine and Victor on land! And we were very fortunate to have Jessie, Anne and Richo who drove up from Hobart just for the day!

Participants arrived in 2 waves, one at 11am and the next at 12pm. After a brief intro and some information about what Tamar Canoe Club has to offer: including under 3 trips and canoe polo, we set participants up with a boat, paddle, helmet and PFD and groups of 2-4 went with a leader who went through some safety and basics on land and then moved to the water to practise skills and have fun! Groups quickly progressed and looked to be having lots of fun. There were many positive comments about the professionalism of the leaders and also praise for their clear explanations and for being "very pedagogic and patient"! One group of two sea-kayakers even saw a platypus on the river!

Adam and Amanda cooked a delicious BBQ for lunch, which was a nice social part of the day. Everyone looked very hungry after the 1-2 hour beginner session (it was hard to get people off the water for lunch though!). We also raffled a voucher for a one-day rafting trip double pass that Hippy had organised through King River Rafting. It was won by Brooke Whitmore. Thank you King River Rafting!



After lunch, many participants were straight back in their boats. Keen to keep practising and even attempt the small waves produced over the shallow rocks. After too much sun, but lots of fun, we packed up very efficiently and headed home for a beer.

I emailed all the participants that evening to say thank you, share some photos and provide a link to join the club. Everyone was keen to hear about the next beginner trip so I will contact all the participants when these details become known. The biggest hurdle for most participants is gear but I have passed on details of the club boats for use on beginner trips.



Overall it was a very successful day. The biggest thank you to our wonderful trip leaders. And another thanks to Jonathan, David, Simon, Hippy, Victor and Claye for organising many extra boats or bringing a their own spare gear. We were able to have almost everyone on the water by 12 noon. Quite an amazing sight! Jessie and the other Hobart girls were inspired to try something similar in the South and would be more than happy to come and help out if we have another similar event in future.