

Intensive training for Dragons

REPRESENTATIVES from local dragon boat clubs Zen and Sapphire Water Dragons are combining with other clubs in the southern region to compete in the National Championships at Adelaide on April 21 and 22.

Several joint training sessions have been already held at Nowra Canberra and Jindabyne.

Local representatives are carrying out specific on and off water training programs under the direction of the southern region head coach Chris Cheung.

Combining paddlers from different clubs is difficult, as each club has its own technique, and paddlers from Jindabyne, Nature Coast Moruya, Nowra, Sapphire Water Dragons and Zen are working hard at achieving speed and unison.

Three regional teams gathered at Shell Harbour to compete in the Festival of Sport

Regatta recently.

Prior to the regatta, Cheung had all three teams out on the water for a one and a half hour joint training session, beginning at 6.45am.

This was followed by a full day of racing and some paddlers acting as volunteer officials between races.

In the first race of the regatta, the two premier mixed teams were pitted against each other and paddles were flying as they crossed the finish line.

Once the splash had cleared the paddlers found a sizable mullet flapping in the boat.

It had been hit on the head by a paddle and scooped into the boat half-unconscious.

It was released after appropriate first aid was given.

Zen pairing Viv Arnott and Sue Wakefield, managed to gain their full sweep accreditation during the course of the regatta.

Arnott also captained the women's masters team, giving

all paddlers valuable feedback, both positive and negative, at the end of each heat. Wakefield spent her break time acting as a drummer for the many corporate teams competing as well as boat wrangling.

Sapphire Water Dragons' three fully accredited sweeps Laurie Smith, Charles and Pat Helmore swept numerous community teams for most of the day and the trip home that evening was very silent as none of them had a voice left.

Sweeping requires a lot of shouting.

All three regional teams made the final and in an upset the women's masters team, made up of women all over the age of 40, beat the premier open side and premier women's team in one of the best finishes of the regatta.

The southern region teams meet next on March 20 at Merimbula for a full day of training both on and off the water.



• Representatives of SWD and Zen Dragon Boat Clubs at the Shell Harbour Regatta were, (back): Charles Helmore (left) and Laurie Smith, (front): Denise Dion, Eileen Quinn, Viv Arnott, Sue Wakefield, Pam Cocks and Pat Helmore.

Cheung has video footage of the regatta at Shell Harbour and of previous training ses-

sions to discuss.

He also plans a public "weigh in" to keep a close eye

on the paddlers weight and is bringing an "erg" machine to measure their strength.



• Bemboka's Brett Clarke finished was junior winner in the Far South Coast Showjumper of the Year competition.

THE Bemboka Show held last Sunday marked the final round of the inaugural Far South Coast Showjumper of the Year series.

The series, run over the seven local shows on the Far South Coast, was initiated last year following the passing of local showjumping identities Keith Gordon and Graham Johnson.

These gentlemen were great contributors to the sport, both qualified showjumping judges and course designers and volunteers in every way possible to the local show circuit.

In honour of their memory, the series dedicated memorial trophies to the two men, splitting into two divisions, the senior award in memory of Mr Gordon and the junior award in memory of Mr Johnson.

The series proved to be a hotly contested event attracting more riders to more shows.

About halfway through the series, 11 year-old Lane Clarke of Bemboka took a convincing lead in the junior division and by the final round became unbeatable.

The senior division

went right down to the wire with the top three placed competitors Jamie Smith of Bega, Brett Clarke of Bemboka and Neville Cuzner of Bodalla all turning up at Bemboka Show and exchanging the lead among themselves throughout the day.

The presumption was that who ever won the last event, assuming it would be one of these three, would be the eventual winner.

The competitive tension has never been so thick in the history of Bemboka Show competition, the show now

Clarke's too strong



• Far South Coast Senior Showjumper of the Year for 2010 is Lane Clarke of Bemboka.

dubbed "Bemboka Royal", after the fantastic display of competitor's showjumping under pressure.

Every rider was out to win, but to win what?

It wasn't for the prize money, there were no prizes or qualifications up for grabs, it was just the pride that came with being the very first winner of the Far South Coast Showjumper of the Year.

The eventual winner was the last competitor of the day, the home crowd favourite Brett Clarke.

The inaugural winners of the Far South Coast Showjumper of the Year Series are a father and son team.

The Graham Johnson Memorial Junior Trophy was won by Lane Clarke riding GH Rambo.

The Keith Gordon Memorial Senior Trophy was won by Brett Clarke riding GH Tigerlilly.

These two riders will receive a trophy jacket

and rug which has been proudly donated by Stewart and Tracy Smith of Chester & Smith Stock and Station Agents of Bega.

These awards will be presented at a special presentation dinner to be held at the Asian Pearl restaurant at the Grand Hotel in Bega.

All competitors, show committee members, show sponsors and ring volunteers are invited to join the celebration on Saturday March 27, starting at 6.30pm.

The Bega Show-jumping Club will be glad to shout all of this year's supporters to a feast from the Chinese buffet.

The committee thanks everyone who co-operated in making this series a success.

If you would like to attend the dinner, contact committee member Kirsty McPaul on 0421 902 438.

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