

AVON DESCENT 2016 MEDIA GUIDE

Northam's Avon Descent Association extends a warm welcome to media representatives for the 2016 Avon Descent.

Apart from the spectacle of the annual power boat and paddle classic, there are some significant personal stories and milestones highlighting this year's event:

- Power dinghy racer Gary McNamara will compete in his 40th Avon Descent, the first competitor to reach this amazing milestone. Gary has not missed a race since 1977.
- Paddling legend Darry Long and his partner Paul Genovesi will pair up once again in a double kayak 20 years after setting a race record for their class. That record still stands today.
- Interstate paddle rivalry returns with the Spirit Paddle Sports Challenge between Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia.

NADA has also been keen to make the event as attractive as possible for those who want to watch the action from the riverbank. One of the changes this year is a modification to the rock wall at Extracts Weir, Toodyay, to improve water flow and make it easier for competitors to "shoot" the weir without having to drag or carry their boats.

Trials so far have shown it will be a great spectacle this year. River conditions in the lead-up have been ideal and are expected to stay that way through to race weekend.

Off the water there are some new features that will help the flow of information and help reporters and news crews build an accurate and up to date picture of the state of the race.

RaceHUB is now a key feature of the Day One finish at the Boral Campsite, Cobbler Pool, and is the place to go for updates and any help you need.

The following pages contain more information on RaceHUB, some Avon Descent facts and figures and a contact list so we can be reached during the event.

We hope you enjoy Avon Descent 2016 and look forward to seeing you on the riverbank.



AVON DESCENT Fast Facts & Figures

First Avon Descent:	1973
2016 Avon Descent:	44 th
Race Start:	Avon River, Northam
Race Finish:	Swan River, Bayswater
Race Length:	124 kilometres.
Paddle entries this year:	359
Power dinghy entries this year:	128 competitors – 64 Power Dinghy (highest number in over a decade)
Outright paddle record:	1983 Northam to Bayswater D Long 7:56:09
Outright power dinghy record:	2008 Northam to Bayswater I Williamson T Williamson 2:11:51
Youngest competitor this year:	16
Oldest competitor this year:	69

Full Event details and history in the 2016 Event Guide (under Information for Competitors)



AVON DESCENT RaceHUB

Then the NEW RaceHUB is the One-Stop-Shop for all your Avon Descent information in 2016.

The RaceHUB will be the home of all Avon Descent official race functions, including providing a central focus for competitors, support crew and spectators. The RaceHUB will be located in a large marquee and will be conveniently located on the left hand side of the Cobbler Pool Campsite. Functions inside the RaceHUB will include specialist areas such as Race Timing, Official Information, Media, Avon Descent Support Unit, Medical, Campsite Operations, Social Media, TV Chill-Out Zones and Avon Descent merchandise. This year, we are also pleased to offer a dedicated massage facility designed to ease the aches and pains that the wild ride down the Valley is likely to cause. Get in early though, as this attraction is destined to be one of the most popular parts of the RaceHUB.

A designated Food Truck Alley will be in place on entry to the campsite, offering a delicious selection of gourmet food trucks. Vendors will include Indian, Mr Potato, Kebabs, Burgers, Chicken Treat and Coffee Vans selling espresso delights and breakfast rolls on Sunday.

An entertainment stage will also be located in the RaceHUB to host a Saturday Night Variety Performance that will be showing, called The Avon Extra. The performance will include comedians, entertainers, Avon Descent Multi-Media Montage, Meet-the-Racers discussion with the leaders in each of the Race Classes and a Fireworks display for kids and big-kids alike.

The RaceHUB is your One-Stop-Shop for all questions for competitors, support crews and families. It will also be a great social gathering point for everyone to meet, have a coffee, find out your grid positions for Day 2 and to talk about your experiences of the race. Please don't hesitate to drop in at any point and speak with the friendly team of volunteers in the Avon Descent RaceHUB!



AVON DESCENT Competitors to look out for

Darryl Long

There is a very good chance veteran paddler and record holder Darryl Long will finish his 35th Avon Descent this year. When he does it will be another personal triumph for Darryl, but, this time tinged with sadness. In January, Darryl's partner Sue Quick died as the pair set out to paddle the Blackwood River. Sue was last year's women's Avon champion and a much loved and respected member of the Ascot Kayak Club and the broader paddling community. The 35th Avon for Darryl will also wind back the clock 20 years for he and his mate Paul Genovesi. The pair still hold the doubles record set in 1996 and will line up again this year.

Gary McNamara

Every Avon Descent since 1977 has featured the name Gary McNamara. Veteran paddler Russell Wright has also completed 39 Avon's, but unfortunately did not get the all clear from his doctor in time to prepare for the race, allowing Gary to have the honour on his own. Like so many Avon stories, family involvement features heavily. Gary races with son Glenn and they will be given special recognition at the start line to mark Gary's contribution to the Avon legend.

Boat number 90 will start 10 minutes ahead of the first grid and will no doubt be given a stirring send-off as one of the Avon's most defining stories completes another remarkable chapter.

Tribute to Ian Williamson

The death of Ian Williamson in April was a shock to the Avon Descent fraternity and a sad reminder of the enormous contribution he made to power dinghy racing and the management of the event in general. Ian, who was 67, was lining up for his 37th Avon this year and it would surprise nobody to know that he was just as excited about the prospect as he was back in 1980. Ian was a five-time Avon winner and proud to have won four of those with son Todd in their familiar boat 166. Away from the river, Ian's enormous energy and willingness to contribute resulted in years of invaluable service to both the Power Dinghy Racing Club and Northam's Avon Descent Association.



AVON DESCENT - Spirit Paddle Interstate Challenge

This year's Avon Descent is going to be as exciting as ever with the introduction of the new Spirit Interstate Challenge. Four teams comprised of some of the best paddlers around Australia will compete in the Interstate Challenge during this year's Avon Descent.

Western Australia

- Michael Baker (Singles)
World ranked top 10 Ocean racer, won 4 Avon titles, youngest ever solo winner in 2004
- Josh and Sam Maurice (Team of 2)
Last year's winner of Duo, only team of brothers on the water, lifesaving background

Queensland

- Mackenzie Hynard (Singles)
World ranked top 10 Ocean racer, recently returned from competing on West Coast of Canada, member of National Ocean Racing Team
- Tanyndon/ Pat Norton (Team of 2)
Tanyndon: professional Ironman for years, tackled Molokai Board Race in Hawaii
Pat: represented Australia as junior kayaker, runner up for The World Single Ski Title in 2010

New South Wales

- Joey Hall (Singles)
Top 5 of this year's Hawaiian Molokai race
- Wes Berg/ Ben Carberry (Team of 2)
Wes: 20-year veteran of Professional Ironman Series, one of best watermen in the world and coach to some of best athletes on planet
Ben: won number of medals at this year's Australian Surf Lifesaving Championships, highly successful rookie year on Kellogg's Nutri Grain Ironmen series

South Australia

- Sean Lohse (Singles)
Junior World Sprint Kayak medallist, touted as future Olympian
- Jack Martin/ Tom May (Team of 2)
Two of best junior paddlers in SA, fresh out of high school 18 years' old

The logo for the Avon Descent 2016. It features the word "AVON" in a large, blue, sans-serif font with a stylized wave graphic underneath. Below the wave is the word "DESCENT" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the logo, the year "2016" is displayed in white text inside a blue rectangular box. The background of the entire page is a light blue gradient with abstract, darker blue wave-like patterns at the bottom.

2016

AVON DESCENT Media Contact Details

Media contacts on Friday 5th August, Saturday 6th August and Sunday 7th August will be Marketing responsible Chris Hunt, Media Liaison Fran Diettrich and event co-ordinator Alex Holcbarova.

Fran Diettrich

Media Liaison – medialiaison@avondescent.com.au

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Marketing

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Event Co-Ordinator

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General Enquiries

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Media Contacts will be available all weekend however as reception can be difficult at times due to the geography of the area, please persist until you get through.

