

2011 World Kneeboard Surfing Titles

Daily Report on SKA Participants

Day 1 - Sunday 20 March 2011

The competition side of the 2011 World Kneeboard Surfing Titles got underway at 7.30am today. Only three of the SA Kneelos competed today. The remainder will get to show their skills tomorrow.

Paul Francis was the first to hit the water and for half the heat held the lead over a number of name surfers. Unfortunately for Paul, the waves dried up for him on the left and a number of other kneelos who sat on the right handers scored better, relegating Paul to third and failing to advance to the next round. Paul still has his age division later in the week.

Jake Hadcroft's heat was held later in the afternoon. It was unfortunate for Jake that his enthusiasm made him paddle for a smaller early wave which turned out to be a low scoring wave. After this wave Jake was caught inside while the other competitors scored on the better waves. Although Jake tried hard and made some radical maneuvers, he was unable to catch the others and also failed to advance to the next round. Jake will also have a second chance in his age division.

Peter (Stylemaster) Granton surfed in one of the seeded heats late in the day. The heat was plagued with lack of waves as the tide started moving out. For a short while Stylemaster held second position with only five minutes to go, but as luck would have it a set came through and caught him out of position while his fellow competitors scored the waves. Peter unfortunately also failed to advance and will have to rely on his age division.

Sandy, Craig, Pinebox and myself hit the water tomorrow. With a dropping swell the luck factor will increase. More on this in tomorrows update.

Day 2 - Monday 21 March 2011

The swell had dropped and memories of Lake Woolamai from last November started coming back. The contest was on in small but very clean 2 foot swell. It was decided to complete Round 3 of the Open Event and then move into the Age groups with Veterans, Grand Masters and Kahunas scheduled.

All of the clubs kneelos except Jake and myself hit the water today with mixed results.

Sandy hit the water first out in Round Three of the Open and caught a good amount of waves. Sandy, who is still new to Kneeboarding, failed to match the maneuvers of his competitors and failed to advance in the open.

Craig, el presidente, hit the water in his heat of Round 3 of the Open. Craig caught some good waves early and looked promising. Unfortunately his competitors got into gear late in the heat and Craig was eliminated from the Open division.

Stylemaster competed in one of the early rounds of the Veterans age division and started like a man on a mission. Holding the lead early he hung in there until with about 5 minutes to go when two competitors passed him by the barest of margins moving him into third place. This ended Stylemaster's World Titles campaign.

Later in the afternoon, Phil Arthur (Pinebox) had his first heat in the water in the Grand Masters age division. Pinebox has been a man on a mission at these World Titles with his game face on over the last three days. After absolutely ripping on his first two waves, Phil held the lead all heat until the current Victorian State Champion caught an absolute ripper wave in the dying seconds to relegate Phil to second. Phil advanced to the second round of his age division.

Sandy hit the water for the second time today when surfing in his age division. But as his earlier heat, although he caught plenty waves, he failed to impress the judges and needed to do more maneuvers to score well. Sandy failed to advance in his age group ending his 2011 World Titles campaign.

The final heat involving SKA Surfers was the second heat of the Kahuna age division. Craig and Paul were up against a couple of season campaigners. Both Paul and Craig showed poor wave selection early and were behind from the start. Near the end Paul caught a screamer and unfortunately after a hard cutback got caught in the whitewater. The Judges liked his cutback and gave him the nod over Craig, but not over the other two competitors. Both were eliminated from their age Division, ending their 2011 World Titles Campaign.

So far six of the seven SKA kneelos have hit the water in competition. I have yet to hit the water. Both Pinebox and myself were seeded into the final 64 of the Open Division, which may start tomorrow, surf permitting. Jake, Phil and myself are still in our age Divisions so there is still some hope one of us can bring back a trophy. More on this tomorrow.

Day 3 - Tuesday 22 March 2011

Today was SA day. We had two competitors in the water and both made it through to the next round. The swell had dropped further (if that was possible), but picked up a little with the incoming tide.

Jake was the first in the water in the Pro Junior Trials. In a heat of three, Jake was first out of the blocks with a good 4 point ride in very small conditions and took the lead. He consolidated this lead with a 4.6 second wave and never looked like being beaten. This put Jake into the semi finals for the Pro Junior age division. Well done Jake.

In one of the most exciting heats as far as SA is concerned, Phil Arthur stuck in third spot in a wave starved heat of the Grand Masters age division quarter finals, with 5 seconds to go, Phil grabbed a clean left hander and managed enough maneuvers to get 4 points. He needed 3.7 to move into second place and did it on the siren. Phil now advances to the semi's of his age division. Onya Phil.

We still have three kneelos alive in the World Titles. Phil in the Open and his Age Division, Jake in this Age Division and myself, (yet to hit the water competitively) in the Open and Age Division.

Day 4 - Wednesday 23 March 2011

Another good day for SA although it did not start that well.

I finally hit the water in the Open Division. The surf was terrible and so was my surfing. I struggled to catch a wave and paddled most of the heat. Needless to say, I did not advance and was relegated to the repechage round.

Pinebox also started his Open Division campaign. PB had a tough draw with two top names in his heat including David Parkes, but with determination PB gained the lead midway through the heat. Near the end of the heat David Parkes found one of those rare waves that held up and absolutely pulled it to pieces. David got the nod, but PB came second to advance to the next round of the open.

Shortly after Pinebox's heat, I had to enter the water for my repechage heat. At this stage the surf had improved and the wind was slightly cross off shore. I struggled to find a clean face to work on and luckily two of the other competitors had the same trouble. I finished getting the nod for second in a very low scoring heat. This means that I now join PB in the final 48 of the open division.

Tomorrow will see Jake and PB surf in their age division semi finals and possible I may be on again in my age division final. We are getting near the business end and lets hope we can keep advancing. More tomorrow night.

Day 5 - Thursday 24 March 2011

It had to happen. Victoria's weather threw everything at us today, strong onshore winds, rain and a dropping swell, which turned into a windswell later in the day

I got the best of the conditions entering the water in the first heat of the day, before the wind a rain came and while there was a little swell. Scoring only one good wave and failing to find a good second in deteriorating conditions, I found myself in third place at the end of the heat, failing to advance.

Jake hit the water around lunch time as the contest was called off for three hours. The conditions had not improved but a higher tide convinced the organisers to send the age semi-finals in the water. Jake also only caught one good wave then struggled with the current around the sandbars. Failing to score a good second wave Jake was relegated to third place and fail to advance to the final of his age division.

Phil surfed in his heat of the Open Division late in day. Rain squalls and gusty winds made the conditions almost impossible to surf, but yet they managed. Phil caught one good ride from way out back to the shore and scored well. He also did this on another two waves but failed to get the wave faces to perform and did not score that well. I had picked Phil to come in second, but the Judges saw it different and Phil came a close third and unfortunately failed to advance in the open division.

Both Phil and myself are still in our age divisions. Phil will more than likely surf the semi finals for the Grand Masters tomorrow and there is every chance that I will surf in my age final tomorrow. But more of that later.

Day 6 - Friday 25 March 2011

The swell built up overnight, but so did the wind. The contest was shifted to a sheltered bay at the Penguin Parade called Centre Break. They ran the open round of 24 and quarter finals, the final for the Pro Juniors and a number of semi-finals, including the Grand Masters semi-final, which involved Pinebox.

Pinebox waited all day to get in the water and with a high tide the swell size had picked up, but conditions were still marginal. The Judges were paying for radical manoeuvres early in the wave and one of Pinebox's competitors did just that and scored a 8.75 ride leaving Pinebox and Baden Smith (a former World

Champion) fighting out for second spot. The contest was close and Phil needed a 4.55 ride but unfortunately PB only managed a 4 point ride to miss a final spot by the barest of margins. A great effort PB, you've done the State and SKA boys proud.

Tomorrow is the last day of competition and I am the only SA competitor left as there were only four in my age group, which means that I am automatically in the Final. My aim is to win. Lets hope I get the waves. More on that tomorrow.

Day 7 - Saturday 26 March 2011

The swell dropped slightly overnight and the wind, still onshore, but easing. They decided to hold the contest at Woolamai in what could only be described as below average conditions, which deteriorated further as the tide went out. The contest was put on hold as the tide went out and restarted at 1pm.

My age division final was in the second heat in the water after the 1pm restart. I found it hard to score a wave, but managed to get a short ride early. I then decided to paddle out back to catch a bigger one hoping it wont close out. As luck would have it I got pounded by a few waves and washed back on the inside losing valuable time. I scored two more short rides on the inside, but it wasn't enough. I finished third by 1 point, but was well behind the winner.

Albert Munoz won the open event which was also held in terrible conditions, but the radical manoeuvres that the open finalists performed made the surf look good.

Hope you enjoyed these daily updates. When I get home in a few days I will be putting together a full report and some photo galleries as the photos come in