



## MEDIA RELEASE

### MOOLOOLABA JUNIORS SHINE ON FINAL DAY OF NATIONAL MARATHON TITLES

**MOOLOOLABA, 13 MAY 2012:** Mooloolaba's young stars did their home crowd proud on day two of the Australian Outrigger Canoe Racing Association 2012 OC6 National Marathon Titles, with Mooloolaba crowned Junior National Marathon Champion Club.

It was a day of victories for Mooloolaba, also snaring the Senior National Marathon Club title from Outrigger Australia by just four points, landing the club the overall National Marathon Champion Club crown.

Outrigger Australia crossed the line first in the 16km mixed marathon – the final event of the day – earning the club's Masters 40+ team first place in their division for their 1 hour, 18 minute, 36 second finish time.

The club's Open mixed division team crossed the line second in 1 hour and 19 minutes ahead of third over the line Brisbane.

But the morning was all about Junior racing and it was a day of impressive results for the young paddlers.

All six members of the Mooloolaba 19-and-under mixed crew who thundered across the 10km event finish line first will head to Canada in August, their weekend win sure to further boost their confidence ahead of the World Sprint titles.

The team of Teaicia Adams, Rebecca Rasmussen, Joel Humby, Te Otimi Patara, Mitch Olds and Nick Wendt were in fine form as they powered over the line more than two minutes ahead of second finishers Cradle Coast from Tasmania, in just 43 minutes and 17 seconds.

It's a family affair for several of the young stars – Wendt's father Trevor was part of Mooloolaba Senior Masters 50+ team that won its division in the 22km men's long course race on Saturday, while Olds's father Grant paddles for North Queensland club Canoe Point.

Tasmanian teen paddling powerhouses Zack Cobbing and Emily Probert also continued their domination, with their crew arriving second, still a minute ahead of third place getters Currumbin's Outrigger Australia.

Hot on the heels of impressive results at the National Sprint Titles on the Sunshine Coast earlier this year, the Cradle Coast pair and their 19-and-under crew crossed the line in 46 minutes and 29 seconds.

Probert, who hauled an impressive six gold medals home from the National Sprint Titles at Lake Kawana in February says the National Marathon Titles were valuable training ahead of Canada.

“There are not a lot of races left before we head over so it’s important to make the most of every opportunity,” says Probert.

Probert and Cobbing, who was part of the Tasmanian crew who secured silver in the open men’s 1500m at Lake Kawana in February, were in good company, with some of the nation’s top young paddlers testing their mettle at Mooloolaba.

Mooloolaba juniors showed their skills in the 5km 14-and-under mixed event, with a crew crossing the line in 27 minutes and 39 seconds – 28 seconds faster than Canoe Point in second, with Outrigger Australia a close third.

Mooloolaba was again the stand out in the 12-and-under mixed race beating two Canoe Point crews with a convincing 1 minute, 11 second lead.

A close race for second and third placing in the 16-and-under mixed 8km event made for a crowd-pleasing thrill to the finish.

Outrigger Australia hammered home in first place recording a time of 28 minutes, 11 seconds, with the Canoe Point team in second at 28 minutes, 42 seconds, just seconds ahead Mooloolaba’s 28 minute 49 second time.

The home club’s strong performance in the lower age grades is perhaps not surprising, given the club’s strong emphasis on youth development.

“One of the biggest things our club can hang its hat on is the culture we’ve got for promoting and pushing forward our youth and junior development,” says Mooloolaba club president Ron Grabbe.

“The committee realises that if we do not promote junior development the future of our sport is very limited.

“We’ve been seen as leaders in that for the past 10 years and we have got some great junior coaches and the support of the committee to drive that,” he says.

22 Mooloolaba OCC juniors will head to Canada in August.

Junior coach Allan Rasmussen says the weekend events have helped gauge how the young paddlers were performing ahead of the world event.

He says Mooloolaba’s Canada competitors will train with juniors from across the country at a planned meet before heading over in August.

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