

## SURVEY RESULTS

### 2021 PADDLE AUSTRALIA (PA) CANOE SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIPS

#### NEWSLETTER 9

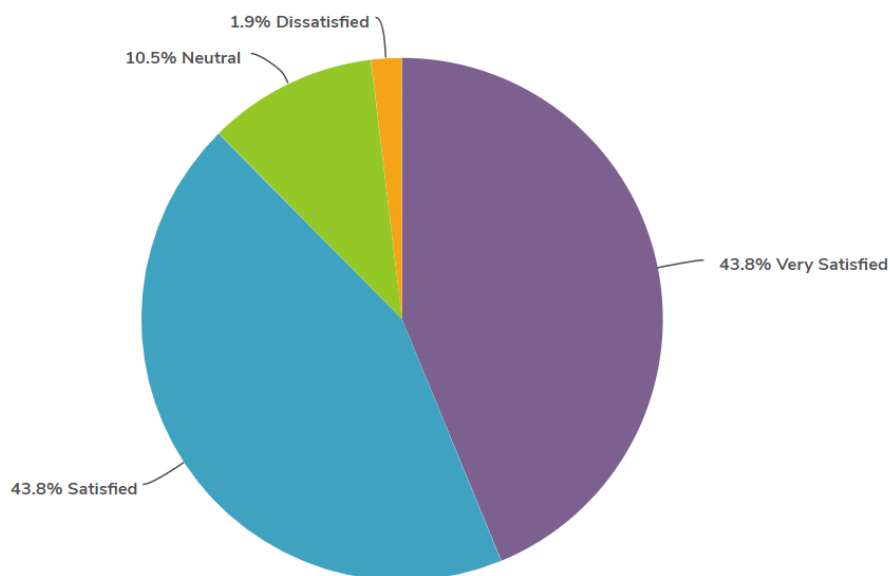
25 June 2021

Dear Sprint Community,

The 2021 PA Canoe Sprint Championships (Sprint Championships) survey closed on Monday 21 June at midnight. There were 108 respondents with 71 completing and 37 partially completing the survey.

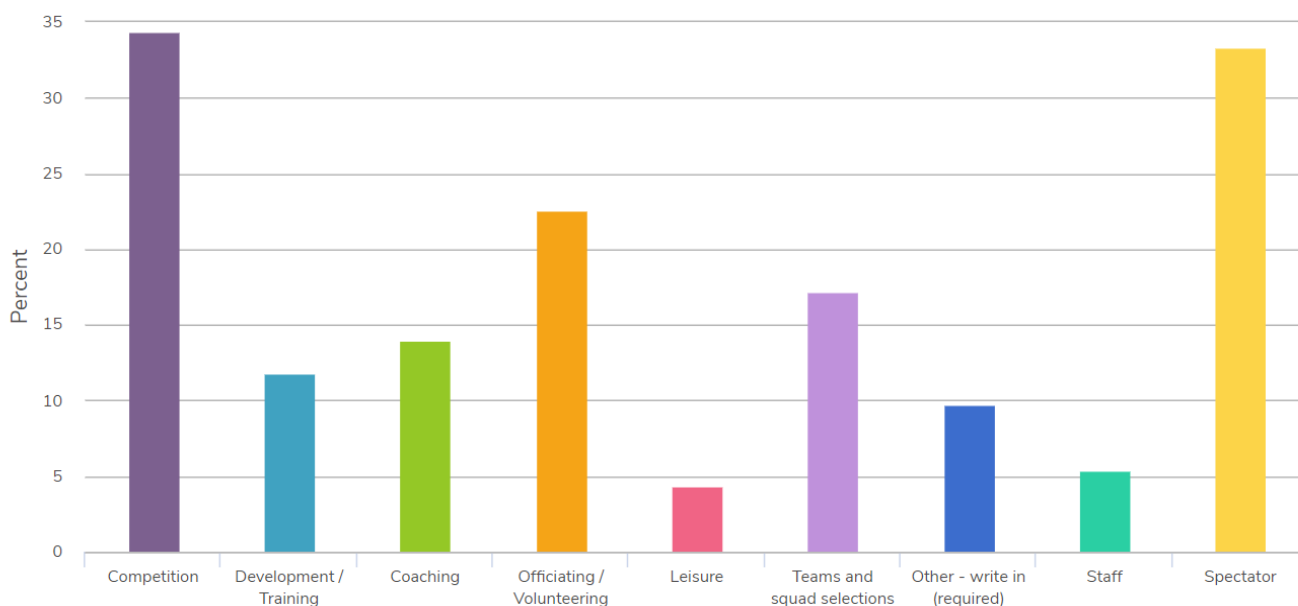
The survey included responses from participating athletes (26.9%), coaches (14%), support staff (4.3%), officials and volunteers (21.5%), family/friends (30.1%), and supporters (3.2%).

I am incredibly pleased to report the **overall satisfaction** with the PA 2021 Sprint Championships event was **87.6% very satisfied or satisfied**, 10.5% neutral, and 1.9% dissatisfied.



Please see a summary of key results from the event survey questions below.

## Why did respondents to the survey attend the 2021 PA Canoe Sprint Championships?



- The largest reason survey respondents attended the Championships was for a competition 34.4%, spectator 33.3%, and officiating / Volunteering 22.6% experience.

## Did respondents think it was the right time of year for the 2021 Sprint Championships?

There were **61.3% of respondents who said yes** the event was held at an appropriate time of year, and 38.7% who said no.

### If no, why?

1. Too cold. Not the ideal course due to the slowness of the course and the winds.
2. Too late in the season making it a very long season for paddlers and coaches.
3. May is not our traditional time of year, but due to circumstances it was a good back-up plan. Extremely fortunate we had good weather as it could otherwise have been horrendously cold.
4. Too late in the year, however we are aware this was due to covid.
5. It was too late in the year. Senior school kids, year 11 and year 12 cannot keep up the training into term 2 as they are getting ready for exams followed by trials.
6. Too close to marathon competitions. Too late would usually clash with the international World Cup season.

**NOTE: Dates and location for the 2022 Paddle Australia (PA) Canoe Sprint Championships are Tuesday 29 March to Saturday 2 April at Champion Lakes in Perth WA. This is the week prior to the Australian Surf Lifesaving Championships also being held in Perth WA.**

**PA/PWA are working closely with SLSWA/SLSA and investigating a potential combined downwind paddle craft race in the few days between the two major Perth events. The intention is a complimentary flatwater and surf paddling calendar for the benefit of all.**

## When do respondents think the right time of year is for the PA Canoe Sprint Championships?

Responses included;

1. March/April was the overwhelming response.
2. Mid-March but not at the same time as Surf Lifesaving Championship events.
3. February / March.
4. Same time every year.
5. End of the January school holidays or February.
6. March gives enough time for athletes to train for marathon season, May was a bit later than preferred.

## Respondents rating of the West Lakes venue in Adelaide in 2021 included:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Responses
Venue						
Count	33	37	8	3	2	83
Row %	39.8%	44.6%	9.6%	3.6%	2.4%	
Facilities						
Count	28	47	7	1	1	84
Row %	33.3%	56.0%	8.3%	1.2%	1.2%	
Access						
Count	34	39	6	2	2	83
Row %	41.0%	47.0%	7.2%	2.4%	2.4%	
Totals						
Total Responses						84

**Venue** = 94% neutral, satisfied or very satisfied.

**Facilities** = 97.6% neutral, satisfied or very satisfied.

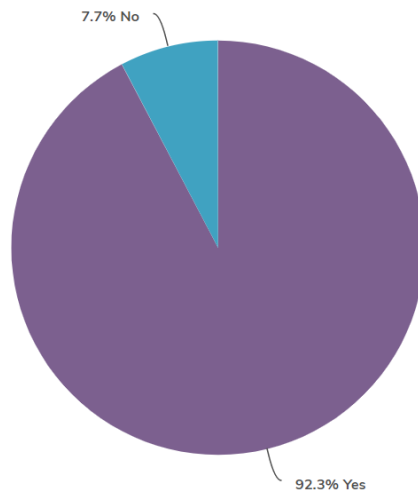
**Access** = 95.2% neutral, satisfied or very satisfied.

## Why the ratings?

1. Amazing. High quality water and facilities.
2. Having athletes and supporters able to sit alongside the flatwater course all together enabled a positive community atmosphere.
3. Adelaide has a great atmosphere but not good for fast racing. Some believed there was tide effects and wind causing reverberations off the far wall so some lanes were favoured.
4. Good facilities with areas to put boats. Good availability of food on site. Commentary was very good as was the marquee for spectators.

5. Would be great to see some investment funds provided for an upgrade of the finish tower and general course infrastructure would make Adelaide even better.
6. Greater simplification for use of bikes would have been appreciated, however the venue was otherwise fantastic.

## Were respondents able to find appropriate accommodation in the area?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	92.3%	72
No	7.7%	6

Totals: 78

## Did respondents find there were enough suitable facilities in the local area?

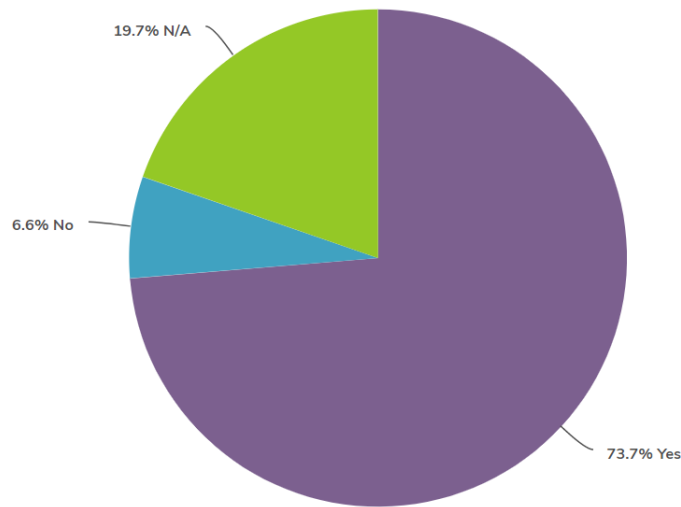
**Yes**

**Supermarkets** = 100% okay, suitable, very suitable or did not need these services.

**Cafes and restaurants** = 100% okay, suitable, very suitable or did not need these services.

**Medical centres and hospitals** = 100% okay, suitable, very suitable or did not need these services.

## Was the entry process self-explanatory for respondents to complete?

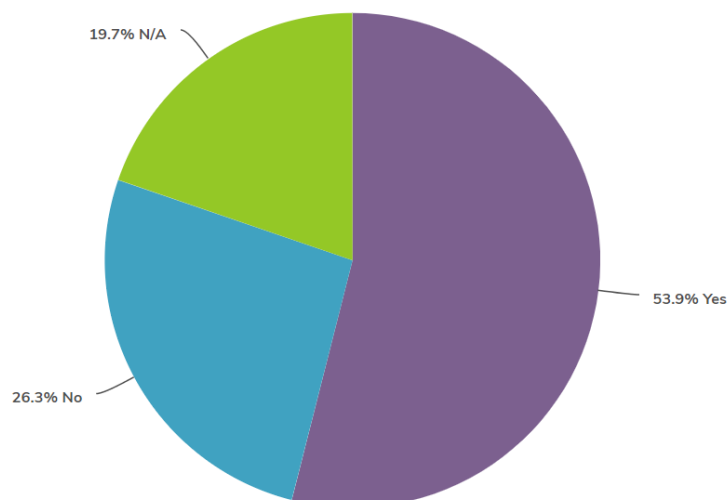


Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	73.7%	56
No	6.6%	5
N/A	19.7%	15

## Do respondents believe anything needs improving in the entry system?

1. Many respondents to the survey said no.
2. User test on multiple browsers.
3. All events were not originally listed. E.g., U/12 girls.
4. Perhaps a little more information about the pool entry process would be helpful.
5. Invoicing / payment by third party may need to have a cleaner process.
6. Searching results could be improved. Refreshing results sends you back to the start.

## Do the respondents think the cost of entering the competition was suitable?



Yes/NA = 73.6%

No = 26.3%

***NOTE: This year PA looked at a different payment schedule which had seat fees with a cap that reduced costs for those entering just a few races, and the cap reduced the maximum amount the paddlers would have to pay to make participation cheaper for almost all. This year we had more participants 230 vs 212 paddlers, however the income from entries was less for PA to run the event. This was a decision from PA to invest in the Sprint National Championships.***

***PA is pleased to see the percentage of people dissatisfied with the cost decreased from 45% last year to 26% this year, however we recognise that further work needs to be done in this area and we acknowledge the feedback that this remains an area of concern for participants.***

### Why did respondents answer the way they did?

1. It's expensive, we need more numbers to make it cost effective for all. Cost needs to be lowered to enable to help bring more people to the sport.
2. The cost is reasonable; however, the payment structure needs work. It was great there was a cap on the cost
3. Seemed overly expensive if you had just a few events.
4. Very expensive, should be fixed not per race. Pricing made it unattractive to enter more races.
5. Could have been cheaper for juniors and masters' paddlers.
6. In the sport that is not the main one (footy, rugby, etc) need more support for the athletes.

## How did respondents find the information provided for the competition?

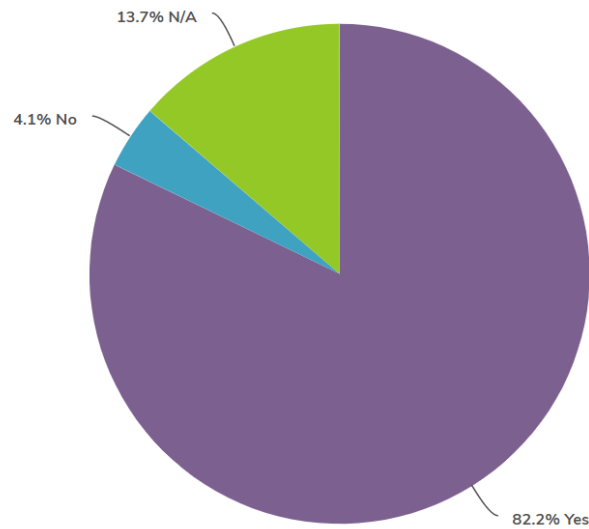
94.7% = **Very satisfied, satisfied or neutral**

5.3% = **Dissatisfied**

### Suggestions for improving information for future events.

1. Maybe an app on people's phones for the event information.
2. Newsletter was fabulous. Loved the weekly updates.
3. Information provided I think is the best I have seen in 30 years. Lucy did a fabulous job of keeping the community very well informed of all updates, including a last-minute change of state and venue.
4. The schedule needs to be published as far in advance as possible to allow kids to apply for time off school and manage their work loads.
5. PDF of draws was hard to read. The spreadsheet would have been easier.
6. A suggestion to have a State Manager monthly meeting. This could be held remotely in the lead-up to ensure communication to a State (subject matter experts) to then disseminate information both downwards to States and then back upwards to the organising committee.
7. Maybe have a formal briefing to athletes attending their first National sprint meet.
8. Scheduling changes effects team boats in junior age groups.
9. Accommodation could be recommended from the outset, rather than posted closer to the event. Also, recommending nearby suburbs to look for accommodation would be useful for those travelling from interstate.
10. It was my first National event. I found info about the race rules and schedule was easy to find and easy to understand – well done!! Especially since it was organised at such short notice!
11. Need to attract more competitive social paddlers to increase race fields, particularly in older classes.
12. The information provided for this event and the many newsletters was greatly appreciated. It was more than I felt had been provided for previous events we had attended and made a big difference. Thank you!

## Did respondents think the safety and medical coverage was at the necessary level including capacity and capability?



**YES** = 82.2%

**No** = 4.1%

**N/A** = 11.7%

## If no, what improvements would respondents like to see for safety and medical coverage?

1. It would be brilliant to have a jet ski style water safety, with a trailing "person carrier". Any athlete can be rescued and taken back to shore quickly from the cold water, rather than trying to haul someone into a boat or IRB. A secondary boat / umpire boat can then go alongside and collect the boat, paddles etc.
2. The safety could have reacted sooner when boats flipped in the water with children involved.
3. Signage for the first aid tent would be an improvement.
4. Water safety coverage during start gate practise sessions should be imperative.
5. A safety boat during the pre-event training session and/or PFDs be required to be worn.
6. Better briefing to safety members. Some on-water safety didn't know who should respond to one incident.



## How did respondents rate the schedule of events during the competition?

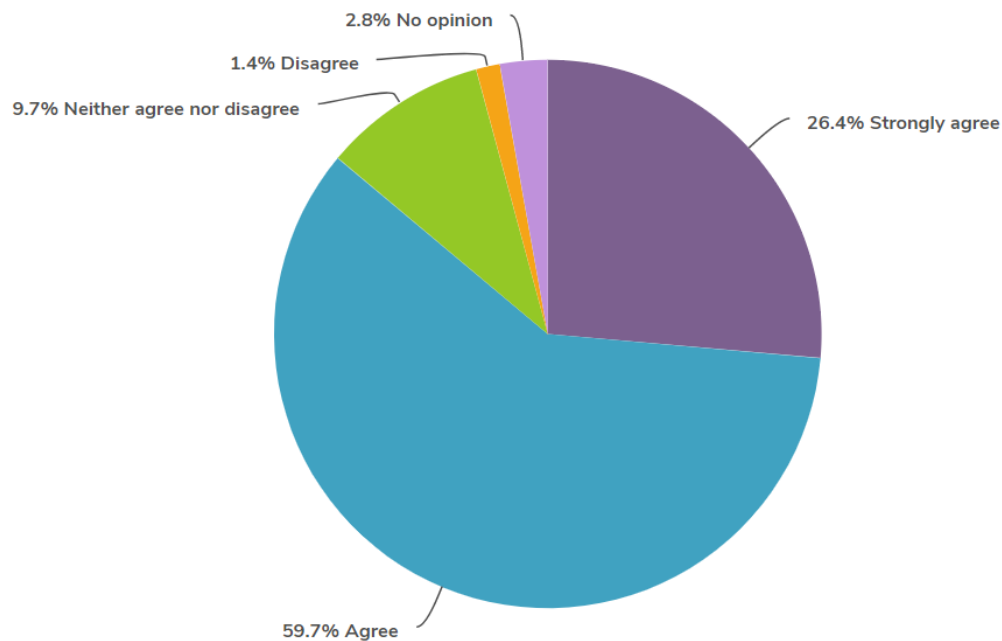
Value		Percent	Responses
Very Satisfied		22.7%	17
Satisfied		49.3%	37
Neutral		20.0%	15
Dissatisfied		8.0%	6

Totals: 75

### Why was the schedule good?, or not so good?

1. Great schedule that ran well. The only suggestion is to not make the U/12 K4 500 the first event for the U/12s. The girls had only just met that morning, had never paddled K4 and were nervous for their first Nationals race.
2. It flowed smoothly.
3. You had to be aware of a few changes along the way.
4. When children were racing up in age groups some of the races were held back to back and clashed and meant that competitors were forced to race, change boats, and then paddle up to the start line again. E.g. U/14 and U/16s.
5. Needs to be 5 days for all athletes.
6. There was enough time to recover between races which was good.
7. There were clashes with team boats for junior events.
8. A lot of racing but I get PA/LOC are trying to minimise school disruption.
9. Too many 1000m races on a single day.
10. The U/18 and U/16 needed a bit more time to recover between races. However, it seemed to work well for all other categories.
11. Too focussed on High Performance and needs to be looked at holistically and without bias to any one age group / class etc. K4 events would benefit from being scheduled throughout the event and not all on the last day. If there were 20min between each change of distance and 80-90min for a lunch break that would be good.
12. Events were well spaced out with enough time to recover.
13. Well managed on all fronts.
14. Men's 500 and 1000 on the same day not suitable.

## Did the competition meet respondents' expectations in all areas?



**Strongly agree / agree = 86.1%**  
**Neither agree nor disagree = 9.7%**  
**No opinion = 2.8%**  
**Disagree = 1.4%**

## What are the areas respondents would like to see improved for future competitions?

1. Keep Live Streaming. Improvements for streaming could include when there is a break in the program a message comes up to advise the viewer. Some pre-recorded interviews would be good for the viewers.
2. Music played during the event. Music to announce medal winners.
3. Have a brand expo to add to the experience for paddlers and retailers e.g. paddle apparel, boat and paddle retailers at the event showing and selling products. Have a range of event apparel for sale.
4. National All Schools competition included in the PA Sprint Nationals.
5. Race schedule, entry fees, and event location to be locked in and communicated by June of the prior year.
6. Try to reduce the number of days for U/16 and U/18 or alternatively try and run it in school holidays or term 1.
7. Improve communication of medal presentations and general information at event.
8. Schedule medal presentations and if athletes are not there (without reason) they should proceed. If they are scheduled hopefully the athletes will turn up.
9. Electronic billboard.
10. More fun age group racing towards the end of the regatta e.g. mixed K4s.

11. Distribute races evenly across the days.
12. Ability to video races is important for coaches.
13. Having relays.
14. Sponsors to lower costs.
15. Better pathway program.
16. More experienced coaches available for new and up and coming paddlers.
17. All school's competition.
18. Internationals from NZ, Asia and Oceania in particular.
19. More masters and recreational categories to increase numbers and therefore reduce costs.
20. Greater promotion and marketing.
21. Multiple commentators.
22. Big screens and Live Steaming.
23. Better Grandstands for spectators.
24. Good to see PA board members and staff in attendance and speaking to the sprint community. Very powerful!

## NEXT STEPS

The next step is for the PA to do a review and debrief of the survey findings to produce a list of recommendations from community feedback and technical feedback for future PA Canoe Sprint Championships.

I wish to thank each and every person who participated in the post-event survey so PA can ensure all learnings are not lost and the next events can be improved and in line with the needs and wishes for a greater united paddling community for everyone.

PA cannot wait to see even more competitors at the 2022 PA Canoe Sprint Championships being held at **Champion Lakes in Perth**, Western Australia from **29 March to 2 April 2022**. Make sure you lock the dates in your diary now.

I am sure next year's event will be bigger and better than ever. More news to come shortly.

Regards,

Lucy Warhurst

**Event Director**

2021 PA Canoe Sprint Championships