

Thursday

So much happening today – acknowledging campers’ individuality!! One group set off in a boat to tackle the Brisbane Waters in an attempt to catch a few big fish! Chris won the Biggest Fish Award, Luke caught the most fish, and Joe snapped up the Encouragement Award for his outstanding effort. All the fish were brought back to camp and shared amongst all the campers at dinner. A big group of campers all headed off early to the Australian Reptile Park for the day. A big thanks to Vicki, Des and a whole bunch of wonderful carers who ensured that the group had the best day possible - a definite must for next year! Our third group of campers stayed back at camp to participate in the now traditional Sports Day. Once again Peter King from Boccia NSW came out with his team to run the ever popular Boccia. Stand out performances came from our beautiful 4 year old triplets Anwen, Gideon and Mahalah who caught the eye of Boccia talent scouts with their perseverance and skill in the 2.5 hour session. We could have uncovered some champions of the future here! In a nail-biting round robin competition, Kirk, Tait, Daniel, Philip, Michael and Shirly toughed it out for the overall title, which eventually came down to Golden Point. Daniel’s leadership was evident in the Finals, with Kirk showing his strategic skills to help win the game for his team. Following on from today, Philip was asked to attend the Australian Paralympic Committee Camp that weekend, and Tait, Philip, Michael and Daniel were subsequently invited to play in the Junior Titles in November! A big well done to all!! The session ended with Peter and Margot (Dept Sport & Rec) presenting Muscular Dystrophy NSW CEO Pene Hodge with 2 sets of Boccia Balls and a Ramp for our NSW Boccia Development Program. If you have yet to try the sport – please contact me ASAP to get your name on our email



Our Budding Boccia Team



Chris hammered the fish!



Australian Reptile Park

distribution list so you can find out when the next Boccia Camp is being held.

After lunch this group then got into the sport of Wheelchair Soccer. Although most were only beginners, Martin Dalrymple (MDNSW Board Member and facilitator) was extremely impressed by the skills shown. Scott once again showed great maturity with his leadership, skills and sportsmanship, mentoring the new campers in the sport. It was also great to see Kirk giving it a go for the first time, scoring two goals with the assistance of Ross the Wrecker! Great to see Liam and Morgan in the thick of it all too – showing immense enthusiasm for the sport.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY
NEW SOUTH WALES **camp** 2011

Sports Day ended with an excellent fishing session thanks to Young Guns Fishing Adventures. There were huge improvements from last year, but Rex and Ben shone in their casting ability and continued to do so through to Friday, where they joined many others with their newly acquired fishing rods, practicing their casting on the Academy grounds.

While all this was happening, the girls were in with world renowned make-up artists, Napoleon, learning some tricks of the trade. A big thanks to Rebecca and her team for volunteering to facilitate an excellent session for the girls, covering make-up, hair and nails, before tackling the huge job of Party Night preparations. Here we saw tattoos for Amy Winehouse, hair for Michael Jackson, wrinkles for John Lennon, and makeup for KISS. How fortunate we were to have Napoleon work with us on camp – and we can only hope we are lucky enough to get them back next year!

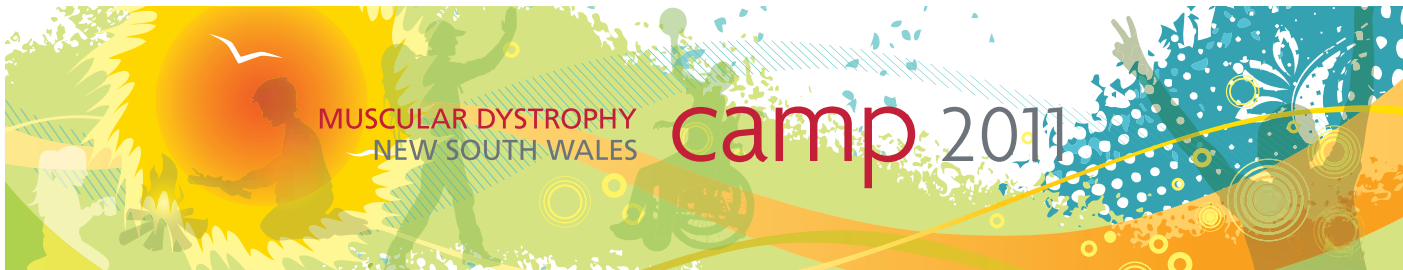
Party night was an absolute hoot! What a great way to end the camp. Our singing group kicked things off by performing the 5 songs they'd learned throughout the week under the guidance and tuition of Debbie from Dance Central. Sarah and Codie showed us why they deserved the Vocals Trophy this year with an excellent performance with their choral team, and we can only hope Debbie is able to join us again at future camps to help bring out the best in our campers' vocal abilities.

Mark from Dance Central worked hard all week with his Beatboxers to drum up a superb performance on Party Night where each member sang their own rap. Chris touched us all when he said to Mark "When I was at school I lost the beat. You being here with us has put the beat back into me."



Liz and Pene get into party mode





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camp 2011

Friday

After getting everything packed up and ready to go, all the campers got together for one final team building activity – drumming! Then it was time for everyone to head back for a BBQ with their families and friends. Our presentation this year was extra special as the President of MDNSW, Rob Ferguson, and Peter Debnam from the Board gave out the trophies to all the campers. Shirl made a wonderful speech and the audience was also treated to a moving farewell song from Bodene and Sarah. That did it for me – tears, tears and more tears!!

A big congrats to Aymara and Jelena for winning the prestigious awards of Carer of the Camp and the Campers' Carer. You two were absolutely brilliant!!



Kirk excelled at Boccia and wheelchair sports



Luke & Michelle drumming



Peter Debnam and Cassie Robson



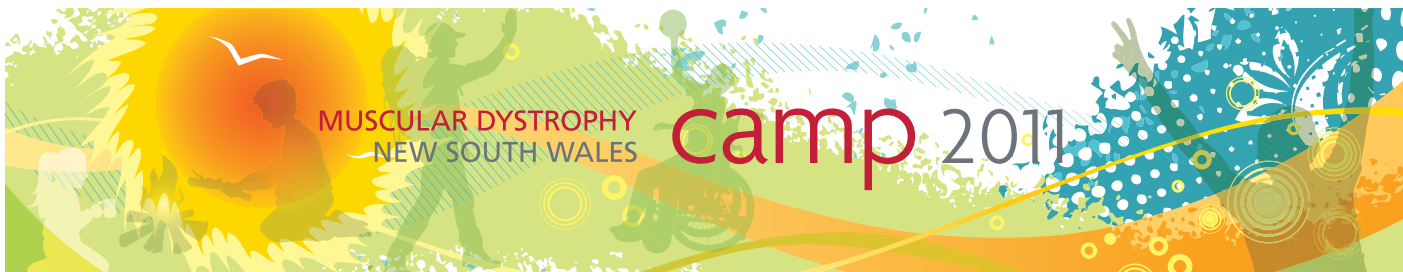
Team Westmead



Blaise, Maralyn & Jill resting up



Our Car Racing champion!



Summing up

This was one of the best camps I have ever had the pleasure of attending! The group dynamics on camp couldn't have been better, and we owe that to both the hard work of the excellent carers we had this year, and to the willingness of the campers to give everything a go and have a laugh in the process. A big thank you to everyone who made this camp possible particularly ADHC, the Academy staff, all at MDNSW, our wonderful carers from UWS and Northern Beaches College, the Neuromuscular Clinics, our wonderful activity facilitators, Jill King our camp nurse, all the return carers from last year, our Camp Mentors – Scott and Bodene, and each and every one of our campers. Thanks also to the parents who trusted us enough to leave your kids in our hands, and giving them this unique and rewarding opportunity. It was certainly a goody and it'll definitely be back next year!!

Loretta Downie, Event Manager



Launch of the



teaming up to help aussie kids

Camp Counselling Workshops

This year's camp brought many surprises and new activities. One of these which I found to be of great value was the adult workshop held by Justin Reid. Justin, having Muscular Dystrophy himself, made the experience a whole lot more valuable as he actually understood what it meant to have MD and the challenges that we face on a day to day basis.

The workshop focused on developing ourselves as our own person and learning not to put ourselves in a box, which young adults with MD have a tendency to do due to their physical restrictions. We had to create story in which we were the Superhero overcoming an adversity that we have faced in our lives. Of course this

varied among different people. For some, it was coming to camp on their own, or the long road trip it took to get to camp. Mine was learning that it is okay to wear my mask in public, despite being stared at. It is part of who I am and if others have a problem with it, then that's their problem, not mine.

As a group we combined our challenges and spoke about how we could overcome them by creating a story that addressed each person's challenge and solution. We even went a little off course and chose famous actors who we thought would be best to play our part in the story, which made it a little more interesting and fun.

This workshop was a valuable experience made even better by complete group participation and a leader that understood what we were going through, showing us that we can do anything, be anything; we just have to set our minds to it and not put ourselves in a box. Many thanks to Justin for his efforts, I think I can speak on behalf of the group in saying that it was something we will never forget. I hope to see more workshops like this at camp in future!

Cassandra Robson
Adult camper



The **Camp Counselling Workshops** were made possible thanks to the generous support of the **Shane Warne Foundation**.

