



### **Australian Tree Climbing Championship Flagstaff Gardens Melbourne 2002**

The championships were a huge success again this year. Top climbers from around the country were there to compete for the honour to represent Australia in the International Tree Climbing Championships next year in Montreal.

Judges and Officials from Tasmania, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria gave their time to assist in the mammoth task of running what is building to be the highlight of the Arboricultural calendar in Australia today.

Sponsors donations totalled \$13,000 in prizes and support.

Photos courtesy, Judy Knight of Arbortech Tree Services.

Flagstaff Gardens in Melbourne CBD, supplied competitors with some of the most challenging trees for competition yet encountered. The North Melbourne Institute of TAFE's *Doug Sharp*, *Sean Hants*, *Graeme Hughes* and **NMIT** students helped prune and set up the competition trees in the weeks leading up to competition date. Final preparations began early the Friday morning before the competition. All was going well; the rescue dummy was hauled into place on a long arching Elm branch. *Sean Hants* had the work climb under control. There were EWP, kit bags, sponsor tents being erected around the park, vehicles everywhere and who should turn up, the Rangers. Apparently no one told them we were going to be there on the Friday and they told us, we had to go. Thanks to the shaker shifter, the doer of things arboreal, the man who makes things happen, our past President, *David Balsamo* came to the rescue. With a phone call and some sweet talk or was it fast talk, everything was back on track.

At 3pm the officials and competitors began to role up. Names were checked off and gear inspected. The sponsors began selling equipment to those needing to replace gear not passing the scrutiny of *Roger Greenwood*, *Kym Knight*, and *Phil Kenyon* and I. By 5.30pm we began to discuss rules of the competition. *John Canning* of **Canning & Son**, sponsors of the Men's Masters Challenge, along with *David Lawton* of **Arborspray**, sponsors of the Women's Masters, were there to greet the competitors and congratulate last years champions *Tom Greenwood & Kiah Martin* who took out 9<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> respectively, in the Internationals earlier this year in Seattle.

### **Our Major Sponsors**





*Stihl, Canning & Son and our friends at Arbor Spray have donated \$4,000 toward the airfares to send This years Australian Men's and Women's Champions to the International Titles in Montreal next year 2003.*

### Saturday 14<sup>th</sup>

Competition was set to start at 8am Saturday morning climbers and Officials arriving at 7am. Unfortunately there was some confusion over who was officiating and at what event and who would demonstrate the Work Climb given the man who set the climb *Sean Hants*, was unable to attend on the day (some people still had to work) then *Jack Sinclair* obliged us. With this all sorted, the show was on the road by 8.30am and off they went. We had five groups of five competitors, twenty five red hot climbers in one place.

### Round 1

Group 1 began the **Chipstar** Throw line Event found the winner for the day in *Scott Sharp* of Tasmania who earned a perfect score of 20 points in a blistering 2 min 47 sec with *Steve Brown* of Newcastle in only his second National Titles threw a comfortable 13 points giving him second for the group.

Group 2 were the first through the **ISAAC** Work Climb with *Mathew Mann* came second with a time of 4 min 59 sec and 67.25 points behind *Mark Williamson* of Vic doing the climb in 4min 46sec which computed to 72.67points.

Group 3 started first on the **Arbortrim** Aerial Rescue, *Grant Cody* of Vic lead the way on 25.67 with *Brett Hamlin* of Qld right behind on 24 .67.

Group 4 were the first to attempt the **Vermeer** Belayed Speed Climb where upper body strength was tested to the limit; *Gerard Reynolds* led the way with a time of 31.66 sec with *Richard Kenyon* in hot pursuit with 33.24 sec.

Group 5 were first on the **New Age Arbor** Secured Footlock Event, this event was made all the more spectacular when Phil Kenyon ran two competitors at once. *Adam Cozzitorto* of SA spurred on by the direct competition did the climb in 17.18 seconds with Australian Champion *Tom Greenwood* behind him on 17.99 seconds.

### Round 2

The **Chipstar** Throw line Event was no walk in the park; however Group 2's *Mark Williamson* managed a perfect 20 points and placed himself second overall with a time of 4min. *Shane Selway* placed second in the group on 9 points.

The former Australian Champion *Brett Hamlin* clearly led the way with a time of 3 min 30 sec or 84.33 points and ultimately won the event overall, with *Brad Treloar* of SA in second place of group 3 with a time of 3 min 37 sec and 76.17 points in the **ISAAC** Work Climb.

*Gerard Reynolds* in Group 4 scored 38 points placing him second overall and leading *Richard Kenyon's* 36.67 in the **Arbortrim** Aerial Rescue. South Australia received fastest time in the **Vermeer** Belayed Speed Climb in *Adam Cozzitorto* on 32.68 sec and Australian Champion *Tom Greenwood* second on 35.75 sec for Group 5. The *Cozzitorto* brothers do it again when this time *Jason* earns fastest time in Group 1 on the **New Age Arbor** Footlock with 19.85 sec and another well known brother *Ben Kenyon* scored a close second on 21.93 sec.



### Round 3

Group 3's *Peter Reynolds* led the group by throwing the third highest score of the day of 16 in the **Chipstar** Throw line Event and *Brad Treloar* threw a 10 to come in second in the group. *Richard Kenyon* managed second

place overall with a score of 83.25 points in the **ISAAC** Work Climb even though his climb was 30 sec slower than *Kevin Alexander's* 3.min.31 sec but fastest time for Group 4.

Girl power shone threw the men when *Kiah Martin* earned second place in the **Arbortrim** Aerial Rescue with 32.67 points in group 5 behind *Tom Greenwood* on an even 36 points.

The raging Tasmanian *Scott Sharp* won out in group 1 on the **Vermeer** Belayed Speed Climb with a time of 38.97 sec only to be tailed by *Mathew McIntee* from South Australia on 39.53 sec.



By now Officials and Competitors were getting hungry *Doug Sharp* began distributing the much needed sustenance which included fresh salad roles, fruit and bottled water sponsored by **NMIT**. Coffee and Tea were also supplied to Officials and Competitors by **Tree Tactics** run by Willamena Kenyon, Melbourne University supplied the earn. Major Sponsors **Arborspray, Canning & Son & Stihl** and our preliminary event sponsors **New Age Arbor, Vermeer, Arbortrim, Chipstar and ISAAC** were receiving plenty of enquiries and sales from on lookers, supporters, Officials and Competitors. *Wendy Jenson* and *Craig Hallam* worked tirelessly and continually since the start, collating and entering the scores into the computer under the Marquis supplied by Burnley College. Their efforts were faultless and the results immediate, keeping all competitors up to date with the latest.

**Arbor Age's** Editor Kurt Quambusch discusses name confusion with *Richard Mitchell* of **New Age Arbor** while munching on a sausage sizzle free for all who cared to peruse the display of climber's toys. **Vermeer** took a moment to impress folks with the remote control **Vermeer Stump Grinder** by driving it around the control tent. *Mike Featherstone* exhibited the **Chipstar 300 MX** auto feed, lift and crush hydrostatic clutch tree chipper drawing attention from many prospective buyers. **Canning & Son** was kept busy supplying shoppers with more climbers toys and displaying there latest array of equipment including Pacific Helmets for those who have decided there heads are worth it.

ISA was kind enough to loan us *Sharon Lily* for the day as special advisor, she also filled in for *Roger Greenwood* on the **Chipstar** Throw line Event for a time. Her experience was an invaluable asset to the day. *Doug Sharp* of **The North Melbourne Institute of TAFE** supplied the EWP (piloted by Graeme Hughes) that lifted competitors into the start of the **ISAAC** Work Climb, twenty five times in a row without missing a beat or hurting a branch. **City Wide** donated a smaller EWP (piloted by Danny) to rescue stuck lines in the **Chipstar** Throw line event, thankfully he had a very quiet day.

#### Round 4

*Kevin Alexander* earned 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall with a perfect score of 20 in the **Chipstar** Throw line Event with second place in group 4 going to *Ryan Head* on 19 points. *Tom Greenwood* secured 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall and first in group 5 in the **ISAAC** Work Climb with a time of 3 min 31 sec and 82.92 points with second group placing going to *Ben Hohnen* for a time of 4 min and 69 points. The man that most trees move out of the way of, *Ben Kenyon* earned himself 1<sup>st</sup> place overall first in Group 1 in the **Arbortrim** Aerial Rescue with 41 points and South Australia's own *Jason Cozzitorto* taking 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and group with a total point score of 36.67. Group 2 stepped up to stretch the "lats" in the **Vermeer**

Belayed Speed Climb where *Mathew Mann* did the climb in 34.37 sec only just in front of *Chris Lawry* on 39.2 sec. We all witnessed the fitness when *Brett Hamlin* blue everyone out of the tree with an amazing 12.6 sec, an outright winning time for the day on the **New Age Arbor** Footlock Event with second place for group 3 going to *Grant Cody* on 18.93 sec.



#### Round 5

*Cozzitorto* brother *Adam* led group 5 in the finale **Chipstar** Throw line Event with a perfect 20 points, 9 seconds short of third place overall, *Tom Greenwood* threw an easy 19 points giving him second in the group. *Mathew McIntee* completed the **ISAAC** Work Climb 22.5 seconds behind third overall *Tom Greenwood* but led Group 1 with a time of 3 min 08 sec and a point score of 79 with *Ben Kenyon* second on 4 min 18 sec. The **Arbortrim** rescue dummy was brought down for the last time when Group 2 competed, *Mark Williamson* placing 7<sup>th</sup> overall

and first for the group with a point score of 32.67 and *Mathew Man* again earning himself recognition by scoring 27 points and placing second in the group. The last attempt at the **Vermeer** Belayed Speed Climb, Group 3 found the days overall winner in *Brad Treloar* with the winning time of 29.47 sec leading fellow group member and overall second place getter *Grant Cody* with an equally impressive time of 29.83 sec. Group 4 were the last to compete in the dueling **New Age Footlock** and good thing to. *Gerard Reynolds* earned himself 2<sup>nd</sup> overall with a time of 14.76 sec and 3<sup>rd</sup> overall going to *Richard Kenyon* with less than a second between them on 15.40 sec.

Competition at any level, state or national, could not happen with out sponsors. But even then the limiting factor would then be people, people taking up the positions as "**Volunteers**" filling duties like time keeping, officiating, and scoring, collating and entering scores, runners and gofers and the all important tree technicians. I want to recognize these individuals and thank them in this way as their efforts are completely selfless and their ulterior motive is to support the industry and that's you and me.



In no particular order:

*Kym Knight, Vince Cozzitorto, Peter Clarke, Trevor Lawrence, Hugh Taylor, Jerry Romanski, Ashley Barkle, Jack Sinclair, Roger Greenwood, Martin Norris, Phil Kenyon, Joe Kellett, Phil Smallman, Craig Hinton, Chris Elliott, Graeme Hughes, Dave Galway, Julia Sullivan, Michael Palamountain & Laura Williamson.* Naturally *David Balsamo*, for his efforts in arranging the venue and organizing radio and TV coverage.

Finally the news everyone had been waiting for; 1st Place *Tom Greenwood* 166.26. 2<sup>nd</sup> *Gerard Reynolds* 155.75, 3<sup>rd</sup> *Brett Hamlin* 154.29, 4<sup>th</sup> *Richard Kenyon* 153.35.

The **Stihl & Canning & Son** Masters Challenge began. The competitors decided to attempt the Masters in order of their finishing positions starting with *Tom Greenwood, Gerard Reynolds, Brett Hamlin* then *Richard Kenyon*.

It was clear from the start; *Tom Greenwood* had a style that rivaled the others. *Tom* gained the highest crotch in his first shot gaining the perfect score of 15. He obviously impressed the judges with his accent into the canopy, earning an average score of 8.6 of a maximum of 10 for his accent, there is no doubt the guy is smooth. In judging his safe attempt at the work stations including posture, rope control and control of movement the judges saw fit to credit *Tom* with an average of 145.6 from a perfect score of 180. Again *Tom* is smooth, his landing and control over gear removal earned him 16.4 points from a possible 20. The Judges average discretionary Bonus points to the man by adding 11.4 points to his total. *Tom* won the day with a final score of 210 points and naturally won The Masters Challenge.

*Gerard Reynolds* made the highest crotch but in his second shot, sadly when he started to pull his rope from the rope bag he found it was knitted, this was not his rope, *Ged* had picked up somebody else's rope and was now stuck with it.



Like a true professional he pushed on and overcame the set back and made his way up the tree scoring .2 smoother accent than *Tom*.

The limb walk took the most out of *Ged* when he failed to keep the plumb bob off the ground losing him a valuable 10 points and the resultant average for attempting the work stations was down to 131.8 points. It almost seemed that someone else's rope was there to jinx for when it came time for gear retrieval all hell broke loose and sadly *Ged* missed on an additional 8 points only averaging 9 for this score section. The problems during the climb cost time and this all showed at the end when *Ged* still had gear in the tree when time was called, this cost *Ged* a 20 point deduction. Overall *Gerard* finished with 152.4 points.

Australian Champion 1999 *Brett Hamlin* shot the best shot in the first shot earning a perfect 15 points and then proceeded to enter the tree equaling *Ged* on 8.8 though more fluid and efficient. *Brett* averaged 141.8 for his attempt at the work stations, consensus was that suitability of tie in points and rope handling skills should cost him. *Brett* had some trouble retrieving his gear which cost him valuable points for control and safety resulting in an average score of 13.4. One judge did not allocate any discretionary points but



still *Brett* average 7.2. There were no deductions scored and *Brett* average 188.2 overall making him second in the Masters Challenge.

Our last competitor *Richard Kenyon* gets the highest crotch in his second shot earning 13 points for the effort. Entry into tree and tie in, *Richard* averaged 7.4 with the efficient use of energy and Tie in Point selection being where points were lost. The average for Work stations was 124, *Richard* was marked down over all areas of point allocation with the single most point loss was failing to keep the plumb bob of the ground. Decent, landing and gear retrieval averaged at 13.8 this meant *Richard* lead the field in this category. *Richard* earned an average 6.8 discretionary points but one judge leveled a -5 deductions. *Richard* averaged 164 points placing him 3<sup>rd</sup> overall.

**Stihl & Canning & Son** gave *Tom Greenwood* \$2000 for 1<sup>st</sup> place, 2<sup>nd</sup> place *Brett Hamlin* received an MS 190T Stihl Chainsaw, 3<sup>rd</sup> *Richard Kenyon* received a Stihl BG 65 Blower, 4<sup>th</sup> place *Gerard Reynolds* received 120foot Yale Mavrick climbing rope.

Due to the lack of Competition the **Arborspray** Women's Masters was not challenged as *Kiah Martin* was clearly the winner on 95.92 points placing her 17<sup>th</sup> overall against a field dominated by males. *Cherrie Neale* must be congratulated for her efforts in competition and was placed second to *Kiah*.

There are more females out there climbing on a daily basis, *Kiah* and *Cherrie* want to encourage those girls to step up and be counted. *David Lawton* of **Arborspray** donated \$2000 to *Kiah* as winner of the Women's Master.

*Kiah* will be using this money to attend the 2003 International Tree Climbing Championship and Conference in Montreal next year. *Kiah* also intends to take advantage of being on that side of the planet by traveling to England and other parts of Europe in her endeavor to increase her knowledge and experience in the field of Arboriculture, good luck *Kiah* and congratulations.

Presentations were made at the Royal Standard Hotel where **NMIT** sponsored the food and *Tom Greenwood* shouted the bar, on ya *Tom*. *Sharon Lily* presented to the winners prizes and trophies supplied by sponsors.



**ISAAC Work Climb** 1<sup>st</sup> prize Arbormasters Harness  
2<sup>nd</sup> Carry all Tool Box  
3<sup>rd</sup> Micro pulley, ball lock Karabiner, prussic loop and dog clip.

**New Age Arbor Footlock Event**  
1<sup>st</sup> Husqvarna Forrest bag, Chainsaw trousers and braces  
2<sup>nd</sup> Husqvarna helmet  
3<sup>rd</sup> Handsaw & Scabbard

Another great year has come to a close; again *Tom* and *Kiah* are our Australian Champions for 2002. ISA Australia Chapter invites all Arborists from around Australia to compete locally and nationally or support your Industry by Officiating at a Tree Climbing Championship and attending the next annual conference in Adelaide in 2003. I also encourage everyone to support our sponsors as they supported us. The next time you require some equipment or training check out the sponsors first and let them know you want to support them.

See you all in South Australia in 2003.

Climb safe and remember what they say, the most important thing you need to achieve in your days work is to go home that night in one piece.

Rodney M Page  
ISAAC Chairman ATCC