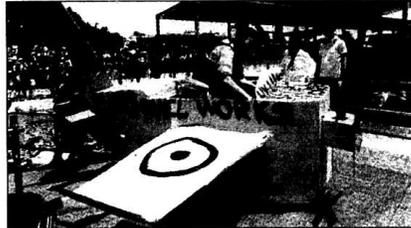


Pelican Push, Raft Race put the salt water into River to Reef Festival



The Pioneer River was a sea of festivities yesterday during the River to Reef Festival's Raft Race, while some festival-goers opted to take a wander through the market trail. Yesterday's Pelican Push was a barrel of laughs as Nathan Lovell took off in his aeroplane from the jetty.

PHOTOS: AMANDA BALMER 011009/244

'Go jump in the river,' it's a fun thing to do!

By FALLON HUDSON
fallon.hudson@dailymercury.com.au

IT'S not every day you see a yellow cardboard aeroplane fly into the Pioneer River.

As the crowd cheered, Nathan Lovell hopped onto a push bike that was transformed into an aeroplane and pedalled fast across the jetty.

He was just one of seven contestants who took part in the Pelican Push as part of the River to Reef Festival yesterday afternoon.

He was also the one who took home the best-dressed prize - \$250 and a night's accommodation at Day-dream Island - for his creation.

MECC festivals and events producer David Gerrand said the Pelican Push was the highlight of the festival.

He said 'Tie-die Man' and 'Aqua Man' tied for the title. "It was just a fantastic couple of days; the Pelican Push was without a doubt my favourite event."

"The sea breeze kept us alive the whole weekend."

And Mr Gerrand was not the only one in the crowd laughing and cheering for

Mackay heritage

MACKAY Regional Council mayor Col Meng, Member for Mackay Tim Mulherin and Member for Whitsunday Jan Jarratt were all smiles on Saturday.

They were at the official opening of the Bluewater Quay public space for which the Queensland Government granted Mackay Regional Council \$8m in Q150 Legacy Infrastructure funding.

"What a great Q150 legacy for the people of Queensland and fantastic example of how local and state governments can work together for a common outcome," Mr Mulherin said.

He said with 2009 being Queensland's anniversary year it was the state's year to celebrate, "Our people, our places and our stories".

the seven contestants who took a cool dip in the beautiful blue river.

One of the contestants was Mark Hargrave, who came from Bowen to see if he could take out the prize.

He was the only one dressed as a pelican and said it only took him a few hours to make the costume.

The Raft Race was also a huge success with many of the competitors happy the crowd was there to support the teams right along the bank of the river.

Raft Race organiser Lisa Buchanan said spectators

had a great vantage point. "It was absolutely fantastic, there was such a good vantage point."

"I was up with the SES and you could see so much."

She said Absolute Enterprise took out first place.

Mr Gerrand said there were positive comments about the festival and that it was great to see the Pioneer River well used.

After a day of lead-up entertainment, the Mackay Music River Rocks concert final was taken out yesterday by a band called Don't Say it Rhonda.



ABOVE: Havoc is created on the Pioneer River during Saturday's Raft Race as teams take to the blue water.

RIGHT: Member for Whitsunday Jan Jarratt, Mackay Regional Mayor Col Meng and Member for Mackay Tim Mulherin gather to officially open the new Bluewater Quay.

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