



Never too old for adrenaline

Barron River Rapids runs wild

By **SHIRLEY SINCLAIR**

BRIGHT red and yellow aren't the most flattering of colours. But add a splash of white and they can give the wearer a spirited hue.

At least that's the case when adrenaline junkies don the Capta Group's R'nR White Water Rafting safety gear to tackle the Barron River rapids, 20 minutes from the heart of Cairns.

Under overcast skies on Lake Placid, our media group joined another two eight-man rafts of tourists for an afternoon delight in Tropical North Queensland.

Wearing our red helmets, yellow lifejackets, togs and lace-up shoes, we must have looked a sight as we carried our craft, named Freaky Fella, to the water's edge and took a leap of faith off the rocks.

Our guide, Hosannah (or "Hos" as he prefers), made us only a little nervous as he announced some of the aptly named rapids we would conquer: The Rooster's Tail, Lover's Leap, Kitchen Sink and Cheese Churn, as well as the moody and unpredictable Mother-in-Law.

Lucky for us, the natural watercourse is ideal for beginners and has only a few of the harder Grade 3 sections.

We started with baby steps – gliding along effortlessly, and meeting bubbling trickles of water head-on. Punch the air!

Soon we were used to sitting on the edge of the raft, bonding as a team, paddling in sync (well, almost!), and responding quickly to Hos's instructions.

This was no easy ride, though, with no room for slackers. We all had to put in the effort and keep our wits about us.

Most of the time, we were "on the job" – forward-paddling to propel the craft onward or back-paddling to gain a better position.

Occasionally, we were churned around like a lone yellow sock in a



Photo: Picasa 2.7

washing machine – and loving every second.

From the rear of the raft, Hos expertly kept us on track for time and on course for fun.

Often, the voice of the running river was so loud, we strained to hear Hos bark out his commands.

But there was no mistaking his call of "Get down!", when we knew things were about to turn serious.

In a nano-second, we had to stop paddling, squat in the middle of the boat and just HANG ON!

During all these Kodak moments, an R'nR photographer was always perfectly positioned atop a massive rock to capture smiles as wide as the lake itself (even if our eyes were closed tight with the fear of a six-year-old on a sideshow alley ride).

The 90-minute journey wasn't all hard work.

We could embrace the scenery and the serenity while relaxing in

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the raft or floating feet-first downstream during a quick swim.

And when nearing the end of our journey, we were keen to linger longer in the calm waters, pointing out strangler figs, strange rock formations, a diving cormorant and the Kuranda train line through breaks in the rainforest. I could get used to this red and yellow fashion statement.

Get up sleepyhead, it's time you were training

IN THIS week's Busy Bodies contribution, I thought I would sing the praises of the early morning training session.

Anyone who is setting the alarm and getting out of bed to complete training as the sun comes up, congratulations.

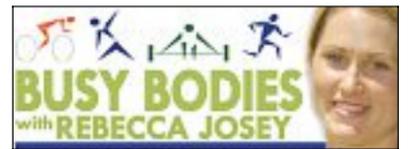
You have the discipline and commitment that goes hand-in-hand with success.

Anyone who is struggling to fit their training sessions in – and let's face it, being "too busy" is the No.1 reason why we shirk training – should be making serious efforts to train in the morning.

There are many reasons why early morning is the best time to exercise but the fact that there are no distractions would have to be the best.

The phone isn't ringing, the computer isn't switched on, the children don't need to be anywhere, you don't need to be anywhere.

The only thing stopping you from getting this session done is your own



refusal to get out of bed and, possibly, a lack of organisation.

Anyone who says they can't train in the morning because they are "too tired", "not a morning person", or "don't feel safe on their own", needs to ask themselves how serious they are about achieving their goals.

These are just plain excuses.

If you're too tired, you need to go to bed earlier.

If you're not a morning person, you will soon become one.

If you don't feel safe, join an early group, train at home, go to a gym, go to a pool, ask a friend to join you.

Many people will declare they are prepared to do anything it takes to budge stubborn kilos but promptly back-pedal at the suggestion of a 5am training session.

Being committed to changing your life doesn't come with exceptions and conditions.

You either want it or you don't.

■ Bec Josey is a journalist and qualified personal trainer. Bec now supports others to get in shape for life as well as events and can be contacted at on 0424 080 321 or via perfect.fit@bigpond.com. For more information visit www.perfectfittraining.com.au



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