

Four and a Half Seconds

The Cat Fish Revival

Carrington's Annual Fishing Competition 2018

You know that moment when, after what seems an eternity, there's that little tug on your line, then another and, ever so slowly, it begins to pull back... and then suddenly, 'BANG' it takes off... the drag whirrrrs, people jump, buckets fly and unmitigated excitement explodes into the air?

For a moment,
everything seems to
happen in slow motion.

Hours of preparation
and, in fact, years of
dreaming and longing
become frozen in a
moment.

The brain pulses signals
that fire around the
body, coordinating
immense physical and
psychological activity
swings coordinating limbs, fingers and other important bits to take the strain
and do what needs to be done.



Emotionally, there is that realisation that you actually have one, even though it's tempered with the reality that you may lose it at any moment. Nonetheless, your sense of hope shifts radically and then, before you know it, you're back in real time and the whole community around you is joining in.

Here's how those four and a half seconds played out at the first Carrington Fishing Competition since the 2011 flood, one beautiful sunny Saturday morning in October last year (switch on your slow motion imagination as you read this):

"W E ' V E G O T O N E !"

(or body language to that effect) yelled Peter from the 'Keoni (5) and Dad' team as he reeled the rod upwards while simultaneously avoiding a foot plant on the oozing bag of squid and tackle box somewhere below his feet.

Over near the bushes at the side of the boat ramp, where all the kids who had previously abandoned their fishermen dads to look at frogs and bugs, excitement skyrocketed as heads popped up (like "Dickey Knee" puppets on the old Saturday Night Live TV show) to see which dad was hooked up! Then, in less than a breath, they were running down the gangway, leaping across leaky bags of prawns and melting mullet, knocking over buckets and tackle boxes and all the while yelling "let me see, let me see".

The other dads were simultaneously cheering and trying to keep the kids out of the water, while privately thinking "how come he got the first one" (or words that convey a similar meaning). One child burst in to tears at the sheer emotion of it all (and possibly in fear that the cat fish might eat his dad).



Back at the club house the organisers, Dan and Clayton, were munching on the last of the Iced VoVo's from the kids welcome packs. Their comment to each other was a clear "thank goodness someone's got something" (again this is the gist of what was said) as their internal fear that the reinstatement of the event might actually be fish-less dissipated. It had been eight years since the event had been run and now, it had become a tradition and was back on track.

After the fish-off, families got together for a BBQ lunch, honourable mentions, encouragements and awards were dished out and the surviving cat fish gulped a sigh of relief in the knowledge they were safe for another year!

The 2019 Fishing competition will be on again later in the year, so keep your eye open for the date to be announced. In the mean time, congratulations to the Keoni and Peter team. May you enjoy basking in the glory of it all - until we meet again!