

New Leaders Conference and International Collegiate Mining Games Kalgoorlie 2006

Arrival

'Twas a cold and stormy morning when 12 students gathered at Sydney Airport to travel to Perth, Western Australia. This group of mining engineering students was on its way to the annual New Leaders Conference and International Collegiate Mining Games, in Kalgoorlie.

After the leisurely five-hour flight, the group of now slightly frazzled students boarded a 14 seater bus and, armed with various flavours of ale, started what would be a 10 hour trip through the bush to Kalgoorlie.

On arrival at the illustrious Recreation Hotel in Boulder later that night, the bus unloaded into what would become our home for the next two days. During some light refreshments, the crew chatted casually with the locals and asked questions about their hometown. Pieces of trivia such as the pub to population ratio, brothel tour locations, and details about the local "skimpies" were of particular interest.

New Leaders Conference

The next morning, our slightly hung over group meandered back onto the bus and travelled into Kalgoorlie city for day one of the New Leaders Conference. The morning started with a welcome speech from Alex Cull, the conference chair, and a thought provoking speech from Don "The Don" Larkin, CEO of AusIMM, who spoke of our visions for the future.

Highlights of the conference included the Keynote address by Rebekah Anderson, discussing how best to move forward and prosper in a graduates market within the minerals industry. Richard Price, from BHP Billiton, later talked about building a solid foundation for a rewarding career, by becoming involved with groups outside of the classroom and making the most of opportunities as they arise.

Tom Price Engineer, Dylan Morgan, discussed how an image-based oversize detection system was implemented at Rio Tinto's Pilbara iron mine and discussed problems they encountered along with their solutions. Mark Shannon gave a case study of the ventilation incline at Ballarat Goldfields, and how the adverse ground conditions were overcome.

Day two of conference proceedings saw Daniel Hepburn from Orica Mining Services use footage of blasts, both good and bad, to produce an attentive audience and exhibit the Orica Graduate program.

The conference was summed up during an open forum, chaired by The Don and Emmanuel Hondros. Here it became apparent that some papers had stimulated opinion among delegates, who discussed women in the workplace, the minerals boom and graduate jobs in the industry.

Welcome Function

The welcome function came after the first conference day, and was held at the new Mining Hall of Fame in Kalgoorlie. This night encouraged delegates to network in a more social environment. In fact, in just 20 minutes, the bar tab of over \$2500 had expired! Needless to say it was a merry affair. After the official proceedings, the night continued at Kalgoorlie's Exchange Hotel into the wee hours of the morning.



Matt "Rookie" Jurak answers questions during the open forum

Field Trips to Local Mines



Kalgoorlie Superpit

The fourth day of our Team's expedition was dedicated to site visits at the local mines, this included The Kalgoorlie Superpit or Kanowna Belle underground gold mine.

Kalgoorlie Superpit is managed by Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines (KCGM) and owned by Newmont Australia and Barrick Gold. The mine produces approximately 850,000 ounces of gold per annum and is the largest open cut gold mine in Australia. The pit uses 24 Caterpillar 793 haul trucks each with a capacity of 225 tonnes to remove ore and waste from the mine. All trucks are equipped with GPS units to monitor trucks and their operators. Blasting occurs at the pit at 1pm and 5pm most days, depending on weather conditions and the Wollongong group were fortunate to see a blast during their visit.



Simone models the mining belts kindly donated by Scarborough Upholstery

owned by Barrick Gold and is situated 18 kilometres north of Kalgoorlie. KB uses sub-level open stoping methods and 65 tonne capacity modified open cut trucks to remove ore and waste from the mine. Paste-fill is provided from a network of pipes from the surface paste-fill plant to fill each successive stope as it is mined. The field trip was livened up with push-start practice on the light vehicle the group was travelling in when it was realised that the battery was flat!

Kanowna Belle (KB) is also

Training Afternoon

After the field trips, teams gathered near the Mining Hall of Fame for training at the site for the International Collegiate Mining Games that were to occur in the two days to follow. For some teams this time was spent fine tuning the skills required for the competition, for other teams the time was used learning activities for the first time with the hope that they could pull through on the day.

Collegiate Mining Games



The two Wollongong teams spent their final two days in Kalgoorlie competing in the Mining Games. After some confusion about the definition of a "Co-ed" team, Wollongong A elected to compete on Friday, and Wollongong B was to compete on Saturday.

First on the agenda was the track stand, where four competitors, and a nominated foreman, set up a length of railway track. This involves bolting the two track lengths to existing track pieces, and nailing them to five wooden sleepers. After the assembly of the track points may be deducted for things like inaccurate nailing, and non-parallel tracks. Team B performed particularly well in this event.

The next event was Survey which was carried out by Wilber and Simone who nominated themselves as the A-team's champion surveyors and Nick and Matt were keen to show surveying skills from the B-team. Using a very, very, very old theodolite, the exact coordinates of a point some 40 meters away were calculated. After some debate on how to use the theodolite, our expert surveyors agreed, and eventually calculated a point which would land the A-Team in 4th place. Wollongong's best result at the games.

Hand Steeling is much harder than it looks. The concept is quite simple: Drill a hole as deep as possible, using only a mallet and steel. Each member takes two minutes to drill as far as possible, for a total of 10 minutes. Our Wollongong teams came 12th and 10th respectively in this event.

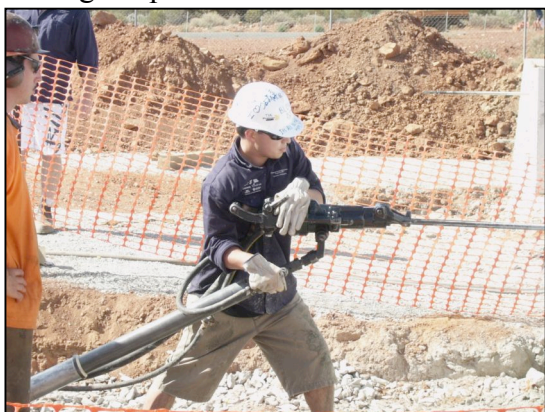
Swede sawing involves teammates taking turns to saw through a 3x3 inch piece of wood, with the total time as a score. Alex, our secretary, was the star for this event, sawing through the wood in about half the time it took the rest of us. When queried on his unexpected proficiency in the event, he replied, "I just got really angry". Let that be a lesson - don't cross Alex!

On to Gold Panning, using a simple gold pan we were to find five pieces of steel amongst a kilo of dirt. Simone, our chapters' chairperson, shone in this event, finding all five pieces in just over a minute. Wollongong B's final time was just over an hour.



Alex. Machine.

Mucking involves taking an empty cart, pushing it up and back along a railway track, filling it with dirt, then running it up and back the track a second time. Sounds simple doesn't it? Well, after around three and a half minutes of solid shovelling, it was verified to the three designated shovellers, that the event was not as effortless as it looked. Our A and B teams were placed 10th and 14th in this event.



Stuart "Frank" Murdoch on the Air Leg

Air Legging utilises a traditional mining drill, operated using air and water pressure, to drill as many holes as possible in the set time. Our drillers were Colin, Simone, Stuart and Brenton. There was some confusion on the practise day, meaning Brenton and Stuart both had to compete, having never drilled before. They still managed to come 12th – beating 6 other teams. Talk about performance under pressure!

Formal Dinner and Awards Ceremony

The week concluded with a formal dinner and awards ceremony on the last Saturday night of the tour. This occasion was held at the School of Mines graduate hall after the last day of competition and the scoreboard for the mining games was also brought along for teams to compare results. The award ceremony took place after dinner and awards were distributed among the competing teams. Many congratulations go to the WASM Wombats who were particularly successful during the days of competition. Their teams' success became apparent when team members struggled to leave the establishment later in the night due to the number of the trophies they were carrying.

Goodbye Kalgoorlie

As they say, all good things must come to and end, and before we knew it, we were back on the bus driving to Perth. Not wanting to miss the flight, we left Kalgoorlie at 3am, arriving in Perth about 6 hours later, making a much faster than the trip to Kalgoorlie. We decided it must have been downhill this time. Our flight was not scheduled until later that afternoon, so a trip to Fremantle seemed in order. The local fish and chip shops rejoiced as the group enjoyed entertainment from a crude 'pirate' street performer.

The team arrived back in Sydney at around 10:30 the same night, to part ways after their exciting and extremely exhausting escapade to Western Australia. This would be followed then by days of serious recovery and sleep.

The AusIMM Illawarra student body would like to thank its Sponsors for their generous support, without which this trip would not have been possible. It was anticipated that only one team would be able to travel to Kalgoorlie for the conference and games, however our student chapter was fortunate enough to enter two teams of six people each in the games. In particular we would like to thank the support of Metso Minerals, Seedsman Geotechnics and BMA for their gold sponsorship. The trip was also made possible by the AusIMM Illawarra branch, which continually support their student chapter in their ventures.

Sponsors information and additional photos of the Kalgoorlie excursion may be seen at <http://ausimm.insysco.net.au>, along with other activities run by the Illawarra AusIMM Student Chapter.



Simone Walsh and Wiebe Wilbers