

Contacts

Post

PO Box 3261
Christchurch

Email

Secretary@sir.org.nz

Chairman

P McQuinn
H 3 358 8938
M 27 239 5969

Secretary

P Bell
H 3 358 9929
M 27 432 5001

Complex

T 3 435 0628
F 3 435 0627

Facilities

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The next major activities for SIR are the Annual General Meeting and the various working bees that we need to maintain our facilities.

SIRI is keen to improve both their facilities and the way they organize and run Regattas. We appreciate any feedback on any issues that relate to these aspects. Indeed, many of the improvements completed to date have originated from this feedback.

Course

The past month has given us an opportunity to assess some of the issues we are having with the lake itself. Many of you will know this is a hydro lake whose level and flow are quite variable now depending on the generation requirements. This coupled with the weather has resulted in a serious narrowing of the lane to the start on the inside of the course.

The picture right is taken just short of the 1000 meter marker looking towards the start and shows the problem quite clearly. The rocks from the shore have eroded out into the lake making the distance between the shore and the first line of buoys very narrow. It is difficult for a skiff to travel through this gap and clearly this will have to be corrected this year before the next season starts.

Part of the solution involves Meridian Energy and their willingness/ability to manage the lake level and flow so that we can get in and return the batter to a one in seven gradient. This will be an expensive exercise but it is part of the ongoing maintenance of the rowing course.



Another area of concern is the launch area for the powered vessels. In days gone by we were able to accommodate all the required power boats to run the regatta. We are now finding that there is serious congestion.

When coupled with the crew changes, refuelling, coaching boats, and various groups requiring on water access there is little wonder that the rescue boat has difficulty getting urgent medical attention for the Injured. We are currently investigating options for improvements.

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Meridian Energy

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All contact should be with Mike
CHRISTCHURCH

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Fuelquip

The photo above shows the wharf and the current power boat launch area. It is clear that this is insufficient to allow enough access for all the vessels required for a major regatta. The area behind the Dias is currently used during the medal presentations and for quick crew changes. It is undesirable this should be compromised.



One possibility is to develop the area west of Woods Point so that powered vessels can be moored there for their various activities. This should clear the current wharf and launch area for safety vessels.

The photo on the left was taken at the last working bee looking west from Woods point. It gives an idea of the sort possibilities that exist here as well as the amount of work that has to be done to realise an effective solution. You can also note that the course is still down but the barge is out of the water (see picture below).



This is due to the need to remove the build up of scum on the hull which seriously reduces its speed. We also have to make some modifications to improve its usefulness and effectiveness when dealing with buoys. Safety improvements will also be implemented. Once this is done we will be able to work directly on the course.



We understand that getting the barge out took a considerable effort and caused some frustrations. The picture left perhaps shows the results from the sorts of problems that can occur. Clearly this is not poise or a case of "bladder weakness".

The course has its own unique problems and we have purchased more yellow buoys and await confirmation of the arrival of the bright pink ones. There is no doubt that the rust-red coloured buoys are very difficult to see under certain light conditions so the fluoro-pink coloured ones are preferred. The task for the next few working bees will be to make up the buoys and the new lane wires. Trevor will be advising of these days and anyone available to assist should contact him for details.

Safety

Safety continues to be an issue and as can be seen from the above information, safety is the main reason for undertaking most of the work. We continue to investigate some safety boat options because of this importance. While we do have safety boats there are two continual problems: the difficulty with getting swimmers on board and the wake the safety boats invariably produce.

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One option that is being investigated is a vessel that has soft sides so that "swimmers" can be "rolled" in relatively easily. Some of the vessels have a flattish fibre-glass bottom and the soft sides can be replaced should that be necessary. This could well have a low wake and this could prove to be the next generation of safety vessel. Those who are watching the Yachting could note the vessels used for support as they are a similar design to that envisaged.

Fire Risk

Although it may seem quite amazing, the fire risk in the area is still high. We ask that anyone visiting or using the facilities takes very good care with anything that could start a fire.

Environmental Protection

Didymo (aptly called rock snot) is a major problem in the area. We know that it is prevalent in the lower reaches of the Waitaki and it has been found in the Twizel River. So, the risk is very real and we expect all users to act responsibly by cleaning and drying their equipment before and after using the lake.

For details on Didymo, see

<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests-diseases/plants/didymo/index.htm>

Volunteers & Working Bee

We understand the next working bee will be during Queens Birthday so any one who can lend a hand is most welcome. Contact Trevor Wilson for more information.



The temperature was warmer than the coastal parts of Canterbury at the same time. It also gave an indication of the conditions that could be experienced at next years MAADI Cup regatta which is after Easter (31st March to 6th April 2008).

In conjunction with this next working bee at Queens Birthday weekend we are planning an end of season get together. There will be a cooked lunch on Saturday and the entertainment committee has organized a mid winter ball on the Saturday night so come dressed in either Victorian or Formal dress. There will be complementary mulled wine on your arrival with continuous finger food served at your table. BYO & fruit juice will be supplied \$10.00 per head. If you know of anyone that would not receive this information and would like to come could you please pass it on?

The photo on the left was taken by Alan Bain at the recent working bee just after tea. While the temperatures may seem cold the facilities available at the lake do provide a comfortable environment for these working bees.



RSVP to C Wilson by the 20th May.

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End of Year

The 30th April is the end of our financial year and a lot of work has to be done to present a set of accounts at the Annual General Meeting at the end of June. It has been noted that there is over \$20,000 owing for entry fees and sponsorship monies. The main concern is this entry fee delay from some clubs.

It is fortunate that most can pay on time but there seems to be a few whose accounting systems do not allow for make timely payments. This needs serious work as they will be known and listed in subsequent publications and entry's refused until they do pay. It is perhaps fortuitous that the primary sponsor of New Zealand Rowing, BankLink, produces software that a number of Clubs are using to great advantage.

There have been a number of surprises for the last year especially with the costs of operating the Rowing Course and meeting the statutory requirements. It does seem that regulatory authorities are becoming increasingly diligent with their responsibilities here. We rather suspect that all courses will be beset by the same issues when large events are to be run.

Raffle

Further to previous notes, a number of inquiries are still being received every month. The situation is that SIR intends to close the raffle on the last day of the MAADI Cup regatta (6th April 2008) and have it drawn the following week. Having set that, there is a process set by the Department of Internal Affairs that has to be followed. This will see the tickets on sale early January 2008. In the meantime, SIR is following the process requirements so...watch this space for more details.

Next Season

For the coming year we hope to see increased utilization of the lake especially for revenue producing events. It is unfortunate that some cannot understand that a major rowing course requires utilization. Any failure by Rowing Associations/Clubs to do this will see other events making good use of what some see as a universal sporting facility to the detriment of Rowing. The net result is higher fees for the quality venue that Lake Ruataniwha provides.

Works

There is a heavy work requirement for the coming season. So far there are a number of activities that need consideration of their priority, how it is going to be done, the attendant authorities and the associated funding. With the AGM coming up, there will be opportunity again for our stakeholders to set in place their direction for SIR.

Please share this with your colleagues.