



South Island
Rowing

Newsletter

Issue No. 5

Date: January 2011

Principal Sponsor



meridian

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This is the first newsletter of the year. First I must apologise for the absence of the December Newsletter. I understand there was some good racing at the Otago Championships but unfortunately circumstances precluded my attendance: hence the result. But we should be able to make up for it this month.

The first Regatta of the year was the Canterbury Championships on the 15th/16th. The Saturday went really well and from the Course Management perspective, revealed that we do have a lot to do. It was encouraging though to see the facilities looking really good and having them well utilized is most encouraging.

The New Zealand Championships are virtually upon us. It does seem that many are struggling to adjust to the earlier time for this regatta. There have been comments from Rowers and Coachs wanting more training time and certainly those preparing and maintaining the facilities time is of the essence.

It is to be hoped that the rowing season continues after Nationals.

Meridian Otago Championships

Having this regatta before Christmas represents a major change in the regatta timing for this regatta. This was clearly approached with a real measure of concern and this is quite understandable. However, if the numbers attending are anything to go by, there appears to have been a lot of support for this regatta.

Unfortunately there has been no report on the regatta and there does appear to have been some delays caused by the wind. But it seems that about 3/4 of the regatta was able to be run. Some have been heard to comment that the weather was normally better after Christmas but considering the weather on the 15th and 16th January maybe things were better before Christmas.

While there are many who wish for a return to the old system that saw the National Championships held later by say 2 weeks perhaps we are now seeing a culture change. There seems to be some support for continuing with the current timings for the regattas.

From a South Island Rowing perspective, this means that we have had to work with ECAN to enable access to the lake for one weekend before Christmas. It may well be this will become a more permanent arrangement necessitating further dialogue with ECAN.



Progress

During the Christmas break a number of volunteers came and gave assistance with the many tasks that needed completion. While many others were using the lake for both passive and motorised water sport, few will realise let alone appreciate the amount of effort that goes into getting things ready for any activity on the lake. While our focus in on the rowing course, even those activities impact on all users.

One of the first tasks is to get the lane buoys sorted out. Many of these have really had a lot of use as they are in situ for most of the year. Unfortunately the build up of the various organisms on the buoys means they do not float so well. Further the effects of the weather means they become quite faded. The picture on the right shows the buoys being repainted. Yes, that is a specific type of paint we need to use to make sure the colour has a better than even chance of staying on them.

One of the other activities we are engaged on is marking out the outside of the course. The intention is to use mussel buoys here as they are easy to see. This is a regulatory requirement and we have to have this in place as soon as we are able. The top picture shows the buoys ready to be launched onto the water.

Unfortunately things did not work out so well. Only the top side of the buoys were painted and they spun in the weather meaning that the unpainted black surface could be upright in some cases. So, the lower half now has to be painted. The task doesn't end there, they have to be located and anchored on the outside of the course. The picture shows Catherine and Trevor preparing to recover the buoys for further painting.

Another urgent action we have been working on is the replacement of the hut at the 500 metre mark. While the huts are showing their age this particular one has a very leaky roof. All the PA equipment inside was drenched in water and even though it was not turned on at the time it does not make for high reliability.

We have been very fortunate to have located a redundant roadside enclosure and this has become an excellent

replacement. In its previous role there was a power connection so its reconnection presented few difficulties.

We have attached it to the existing power cubicle and inside we have located the power and communications equipment. This now means that the temporary cables that have been lying on the ground around the hut have now been removed and correctly terminated in the new cabinet. The hut itself can now be removed, refurbished and repositioned in readiness for its next assignment.





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Many of you will have read and maybe even experienced the storms over the Christmas period. There was a lot of rain and this translates into high water flows both into and out of the lakes. In the upper Waitaki area we noted that both Lakes Pukaki and Tekapo were spilling water into Lake Benmore and even that was spilling in an effort to keep the water levels at reasonable levels.

This water flow generates a large amount of debris that accumulates on the lake and on the shore. Nearly one whole day was spent collecting the debris from the lake and another day was spent picking it up from the shores. The picture above shows Warren Blazey and Darryl Purdon collecting the debris from the shore. From here it is carted away for disposal.

This action assists both the rowers and the boaters as the results of running into these logs can be quite devastating.

To illustrate this a little more explicitly, take a close look at the pictures on the left.



The top picture shows the barge laden with the debris taken from the lake. Here the second load for the day is off loaded onto the shore ready to be transported to the disposal area. Some of the branches required two people to lift them out of the water.



The second picture is of the shoreline looking towards the dais from the barge. You can see the debris that has been washed up along the shore line. All this has to be removed. It is also interesting to note that the nicely graded beach that minimises the wave reflection has been lost as well. This will be another future action SIR will need to repair.



The lowest picture shows some debris caught around the lane buoys. Extraction here is also quite difficult as the course equipment needs to be kept in working order.



And then there is the task of getting the Boat Park speakers working and perhaps more importantly pointing in the right direction. The picture on the right shows Darryl again in the bucket truck re-aligning the speakers. In conjunction with this work a light pole was also installed adjacent to the Boat Marshals room to provide much improved illumination on the launch area and the oar storage facility.



Cleaning up after all the work takes time as well. It is surprising just how much "debris" we seem to accumulate. All of this has to be disposed of. The picture on the left shows just another load of collected rubbish on the way for disposal.



Of course there are times when one does need to relax a little. After such a stressful day it is good to be able to have a spell. The picture on the lower left shows Darryl relaxing after all his work. The building behind him is the new Boat Marshals accommodation where the weigh in occurs. While there is still some work to be done this appears to be a significant improvement over the previous accommodation.

And yes we do provide wedding facilities. The picture on the right shows a typical layout for one of the recent wedding functions.

Catherine Wilson can give more details on this use of the MacRae Lounge.





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Signage

There has been a recent revamp of our signage for our principle sponsor. The pictures on the right show the areas where this has been installed: (clockwise from top left) the display in front of the Lindstrom Lodge, the driveway in, the end of the Row Shoppe and the flags that have been present throughout Twizel. This signage has replaced so of the ageing signs that tend to reflect a bygone era.



Row Shoppe

From somewhat humble beginnings, the Row Shoppe has developed into a thriving enterprise. The range of goods supplied has expanded to provide a selection of souvenir items. Part of the area has also been subdivided to allow the sale of allied clothing that is not available through the shop.

The picture on the top right shows the new Row Shoppe building from where Jeanette and her team are operating.

The second picture shows the general layout inside inside the shop looking towards the counter and the way in.

The third picture is looking from behind the counter towards the other end of the shop. Although not finished yet, this reflects a great improvement over the previous shop locations.



Meridian Canterbury Championships

This regatta was held on the 15th & 16th January. Unfortunately the weather was not kind on the Sunday but the photograph on the right shows that things went well on the Saturday. This picture shows the end of the MacRae lounge, the numerous tents and the remarkable green grass which favourably reflects the efforts of those keeping the grounds.



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Water Safety

We often get complaints from rowers about the issues they have with motor boats especially when trying to train. SIR has worked hard with ECAN to try and ensure that half of Lake Ruataniwha is passive. Overall we have been successful in this venture and we are grateful to those involved for their help. As with all compromises, there is a down side to this and having received complaints it is important this be drawn to your attention.

While we complain about the motor boats on the course and we understand that fines have been levied, the same applies to those training in the ski lanes. It seems that some Coaches do not understand the simple rules of the lake and we have been told that infringement notices will be levied on those who train in the ski lanes. Part of the text of a letter from ECAN reads as follows:

"...We can only conclude that the use of the main part of the lake for rowing training at this time of the year when powerboat use is at its peak, is selfish and provocative. And crucially for us, creates serious safety concerns. I point out that under the Bylaws and the Local Government Act our enforcement officers have powers to issue directions as to where vessels "navigate in a water way", or to "desist from any action that....endangers the safety of any persons." These powers could be used to require the skiffs to leave the main part of the Lake. Note also that all persons are required to obey such directions, and to not do so is an infringement offence which attracts a \$300 fine."

However of greater concern is the following comment from ECAN:

"if this practice continues to create real safety risks, Environment Canterbury could process a Reservation under the Bylaws which would prohibit skiffs from the main part of the lake during the peak powerboat season."

The impact this would have on rowing during the month of January would be most damaging and all because of the inconsiderate and selfish actions of a few. Should such action occur clearly litigation could well follow. We therefore ask that all take notice of this situation and ensure that their coaches abide by the Law.

Damage

We have also been having an ongoing battle with damage and in particular, reporting damage to those who can affect repairs. First we do expect those using tools and plant to know where and how to use it and to put it back exactly from where it was borrowed. As with all our plant we do ask that any damage is reported and either repair it or pay to get someone to do the repairs. The only other avenue we have to pay for the repairs is to increase entry fees and we do not want to do this because of the irresponsible actions of a few.

A number of SIR megaphones are either missing or no longer work. Where and who by is a mystery but the result is that we have a shortage at race time.

We have missing VHF radio parts and in particular the headset. These are specific for this purpose and expensive so someone has to go without!

The radio headset mic that is used for commentary. It is not a fixed or handheld mic and the result is a \$700 repair bill.

Then there is the tools in the garage. Again, when we need them they are missing and there is no record of who took them or where they have gone!





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Clearly we cannot continue with this practice and if SIR is going to continue to provide then we need to have more responsible people using the tools and plant. Otherwise we will have to demand a deposit before using it!

Information for Schools

NZSSRA Championships & NZSSSC school team eligibility criteria

In mid-2007 the New Zealand Secondary Schools Sports Council (NZSSSC) introduced a set of School Team Eligibility Criteria. Those criteria apply to all NZSSSC-sanctioned events, which include NZSSRA's North and South Island Secondary School Rowing Championships and Maadi, and they have been in force at those regattas for the past three seasons.

In mid-2010 the NZSSSC reviewed and revised the School Team Eligibility Criteria. The revised criteria are in effect from the 2010-11 season onwards; starting with NZSSRA's 2011 Championships.

There are three significant changes to the revised criteria:

- The period a pupil is considered "new" to a school after they have transferred secondary schools has been reduced from 2 years to 1 year prior to the first day of the event. This change should basically halve the number of pupils affected by the criteria for all events other than eights.
- For eights the limit has been changed from 2 new pupils to 2 new pupils and no more than 3 over two years. The old rules used to have a limit of 2 new pupils over two years so this change makes the limit less restrictive. All other boats retain a limit of 1 new pupil.
- It is no longer possible for schools to agree between themselves to exempt a pupil from the criteria; instead there is a new Primary Caregiver Relocation Exemption (PCRE). Schools can apply to their regional branch of NZSSSC to have a PCRE recognised if they can provide evidence the pupil's transfer is due to their primary caregiver relocating and the pupil could not reasonably be expected to have remained at their previous school. The onus for obtaining an exemption will be on the school and student and application must be submitted on the form available on the NZSSSC website. Applications with evidence signed by both principals will be considered by regional exemption committees and, if approved, the school will receive an exemption that is to be provided to NZSSRA before regatta entries are made.

While the revised period for calculating when a pupil is new will make life easier for many the change to PCRE's is probably the most important change to note and plan around. Under the old exemption system schools could generally arrange between themselves for last-minute exemptions from the criteria. Such exemptions were seldom declined by a transferring pupil's exit school. This meant a number of crews, which would have been otherwise ineligible to compete, were able to be entered into the Championships very close to close-off of entries - thanks to exemptions.

The PCRE's are much less broad and also have to be approved by the local NZSSSC branch. This means a school/coach who fails to think about the NZSSSC School Team Eligibility Criteria could end up with a crew that is ineligible to compete (or insufficient time to obtain an exemption) which would be tremendously disappointing for the pupils involved!



So, if you have a crew that contains pupils who have transferred between secondary schools after year 9 and less than twelve months prior to the regatta (24 months in the case of an eight) and/or you have a crew that contains overseas pupils then you need to make sure you are familiar with the NZSSSC School Team Eligibility Criteria.

More information can be found on the NZSSRA website, www.schoolrowing.org.nz, or by directing your enquiry to NZSSRA's Executive Officer, Andrew Carr-Smith: xo@schoolrowing.org.nz

NZSSRA & NZRA: School Rowing Integration

At a General Meeting of the New Zealand Secondary Schools Rowing Association, which was held by postal ballot at the end of October, NZSSRA's Members agreed that in order to further its objects in relation to school rowing the Association should adopt and pursue a policy of closer integration with NZRA as laid out in the School Rowing Integration Project Plan.

[Already Mrs Gillian Simpson, principal of St Margaret's College, has been co-opted to the Board of NZRA. In addition to normal Board duties Mrs Simpson will head up the new Schools Committee that is a key feature of the Project Plan.]

Clubs and schools can look forward to further developments as the integration process unfolds over the next couple of seasons.

Lane Wires

The lane wires require replacement. We have concluded that while Kevlar does remedy many of the issues that were a problem with the Galvanised I wire, they have created a few new issues of their own. Without going into the details it now seems that the life of the kevlar rope has been shortened by the presence of the glacial silt and didymo in the lake.

Unfortunately we are unable to replace all of them at this time. The current proposal is to use stainless steel rope which require a significant investment. The attachment methodology will also require some refinements to suit this style of lane wire. We will also have to introduce some techniques that will mitigate the effects of electrolysis.

Next Regattas

The next regattas on Lake Ruataniwha are:

Meridian South Island Championship regatta on 29th & 30th January 2011

BankLink New Zealand Rowing Championships on 15th to 19th February 2011

If you are able to help or want to become involved with running regattas please contact the Secretary or visit the Regatta Secretary at Lake Ruataniwha.

If you have information for distribution via this newsletter, please forward it to the Secretary.

