



South Island
Rowing

Newsletter

Issue No. 6

Date: February 2011

Principal Sponsor



meridian

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Page No 1



At the time of writing this newsletter we are all saddened with the news of such a destructive earthquake in Christchurch. Many of us were directly involved and sustained significant impacts. This ranged from survival with little damage or hardship to major damage with unlivable accommodation, no water, no power and on going aftershocks. We thank all those that have offered assistance.

As with previous regattas, the one in control of the weather was definitely against us for the South Island Championships. It was most unfortunate that we were unable to enjoy a lot of rowing. SIR is quite concerned about this as a lot of work and commitment is made prior to the regatta. So it was with some concern that we faced the prospect of serious weather interruptions for the National Championship regatta.

But the BankLink National Rowing Championships came and went with little impact from the weather. It did confirm that many are struggling to adjust to the earlier time for this regatta and SIR itself also exhibited a lack of preparedness. Continued comments from Rowers and Coaches wanting more training time have been heard and while the RNZ AGM is the place to consider this it is also a reflection of just how inflexible we have become.

Perhaps it is time to recognise just how much the rowing scene has changed. We just hope that the weather continues fine for the South Island Secondary Schools regatta

Meridian South Island Championships

This was one of those regattas where there was nothing we could do to make it successful. The numbers of entries coupled with the race programme caused serious concerns just after entries closed and before the regatta started. It seemed quite evident that there was not going to be enough time to run the full regatta unless there were changes.

However, the weather stepped in and curtailed the racing on both days. But we were very pleased to have the NZ Squad with the CEO on site. We hope their time here was successful and enjoyable. See picture right.





Progress

While this is quite frustrating for the rowers please note that it just the same for SIR and the volunteers who gave up so much of their time. But there was time to catch up with reps from our principal sponsor and dignitaries from the Local Community. Picture right shows Athol Earl doing what he does best.



While we lament the absence of equipment that would allow early morning and twilight rowing a lot of good work was completed. There was a lot of preparatory work completed for the National Championships and many of the operational shortcomings were highlighted.

One other thing that was completed was the new noticeboard. This is an important addition as it allows the results to be posted and kept out of the weather. There is also a slot on the right when the latest day sheets can be placed. The picture on the right shows this in relation to the secretaries office.



BankLink National Championships

Although this regatta was the most important regatta to be on Lake Ruataniwha this year it was probably the most ill-prepared. There is no doubt that the volume of work required and the time frame involved caused a number of issues. However, the weather was very favourable and the general feeling about the whole regatta was one of enjoyment.

Some of you will know that the recent weather at Twizel caused some to propose to have any unfinished races held on Lake Karapiro some time later. SIR was not consulted on this and clearly no one thought to ask SIR about its contingency plans. For the record, an alternative course was planned on Klelland Ponds adjacent to lake Ruataniwha more than two decades ago to cater for such an eventuality. So far, that alternative has not been required.

One of the first things many noted was just how green everything was. The picture left shows how green the area has become. The work of Trevor Wilson and Shirley and Graeme Bond with the grounds is quite evident here.





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As there is Didymo in the lake boat washing is essential. This is particularly true for boats heading to the North Island. The picture right depict the boat washing facility.



Boat weighing also has to be accommodated and this was set up in the garage. As can be seen in the picture left, this proved to be a very suitable location.

Of course, it would be just too much to expect things to run smoothly. The picture on the right shows Pat, the local Plumber and Trevor draining the septic tank in readiness for an inspection. We did find that socks flushed down the toilets caused blockages that lead to costly repairs. (& increased fees)



Although the numbers attending this regatta were fewer than the MAADI Cup a very pleasant atmosphere was created. The picture on the left shows the general layout that existed on finals day.

Of course there are medals to present and this year we were privileged to have Ms Jacqui Dean, our local MP and Ms Claire Barlow the Mayor of the Mackenzie District in attendance. The picture right shows both visitors on the dais following the presentation of the winners medals. Some more medal presentations are shown below and right. Pictures of the medal presentations are available on line from Kolourcare.



www.kolourcare.co.nz



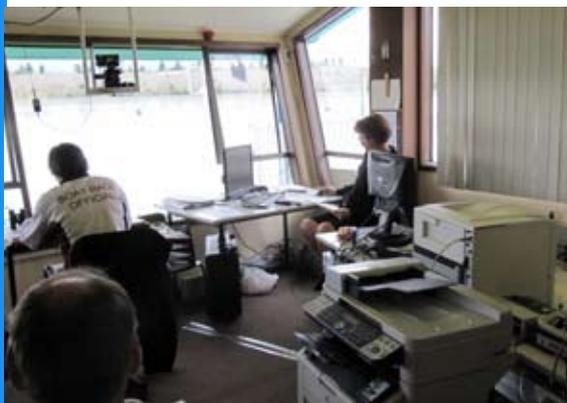


The eights race is always the highlight of the Regatta and this one was no exception. The picture right shows the crews with about 200 meters left to go. There has been a suggestion that the water conditions were favourable but there is no taking away from the winning crew.

Making the presentation of the major awards were Mike Stanley (SPARC) and Ivan Sutherland (RNZ Board Chairman). The pictures on the right shows these gentlemen addressing the crowd.

All will have read about the latest Christchurch earthquake and the devastation it has caused. However, the first one was on 4th September and this caused serious disruption to the rowing facilities in Christchurch. In spite of the adverse situation this created it was the Canterbury based people that took most of the major awards. The Canterbury Rowing Association, the Southern RPC and Avon Club all featured and this is a testament to their resilience and stamina. Waihopai, another mainland club took out the Centennial Scull.

In running this sort of event SIR has to make provision both the media and the judging area. The picture on the right shows the media area and being just before the final race, the reporters were occupied outside. It was interesting to note that both our broad band connections were operating to capacity. It was also most noticeable that the BankLink National Championships of a sport that has attracted more Olympic Golds that any other was not considered important enough for TV1 to attend!



The picture on the left shows part of the Judging area. The photo-finish camera is clearly visible on the roof. There is quite an assortment of computers and related equipment here and we have to regularly update it. What many will not know is that in the week prior to this regatta we had only one working printer and no photocopier. We are very grateful to our item specific sponsor, Fuji Xerox for their assistance here.



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Page No 5

We are often asked who are the volunteers that do the outstanding job of running these regattas. Unfortunately a few key people were on more important duties (or just camera shy). We have managed to capture this picture after the Regatta.



It is hard to believe that it is some 38 years since Dave Rodger broke his oar at the first regatta here. Similarly it is hard to believe that the person who was responsible for building this course still pays us a visit. The picture right shows Mr & Mrs Max Smith watching from the ceremonial concrete seat outside the MacRae Lounge.



There have been a number of media reports and for those present, you will have seen the photographic insert in the Timaru Herald. We are extremely that this paper and in particular its photographer has produced such amazing pictures. It has kept the local population fully informed of the daily activities. The following report also appeared in the local newsletter:

"What a season it has been for Hamish Bond (25), he has remained unbeaten in both domestic and International event over the past twelve months. He added three national titles (Red Coat) to his already impressive collection during last week's nationals at Lake Ruataniwha; he now has fourteen Red Coats to his name.

Hamish teamed with Jade Uru to beat his fellow world champion partner in the men's premier pairs final on Friday. Jade was again in the boat when they won the Men's coxless fours. Then on Saturday again with Jade in the boat Hamish stroked the Southern RPC eights to perhaps a surprising win in the men's premier eights.

Hamish's fantastic years has been recognised by him being named Rower of the Year during the Nationals. Congratulations Hamish it is a well-deserved award surely de-serving of more recognition by the sporting journalists and Halberg Awards judges.

I think during the nationals the only mention rowing received on either television sports news was a brief mention that Mahae Drysdale had been beaten. One can help but wonder if the nationals had been held at Karapiro if this would be the case?"

There have been other reports that have raised similar and related questions, especially when the major trophy's were won by South Island based crews. That aside, we also need to thank "BankLink" the sponsor of these national Championships. Their work with Rowing New Zealand has contributed to the success of this regatta.



Next Regatta

The next regatta on Lake Ruataniwha will be the South Island Secondary Schools Regatta on March 12th & 13th. This particular regatta will pose some serious operational problems for the Race Committee to the extent that the whole regatta could be compromised. In view of their concerns, the Regatta Committee have asked that entries be restricted to 3 races per rower with one of those being either a four, a quad or an eight.

The Regatta Committee reported that in previous regattas some rowers were entered in up to seven (7) events. Few entering more than three gave a medal winning performance in any of them. However, the effect has been to increase the numbers of heats to the point that we cannot complete the racing in the time allocated. The proposed restriction is voluntary and the entry system does not discriminate.

We understand that many of the entries so far received have followed this preference. Further, we do not know what the impact of the recent Christchurch earthquake will be on entries. However, once all the entries are in and the draw made, the Race Committee will go through them to ensure the regatta is not compromised by rowers entering more than three events. Schools where this is a problem will be contacted.

Ruataniwha Regatta

SIR Management in conjunction with interested parties, decided that given the limited amount of rowing for some, especially Club rowers that we should run another regatta on Lake Ruataniwha. At the time the earliest we could do this was 26/27 March. It was assumed that not all school rowers would be going to MAADI Cup and there should be sufficient equipment available.

Of the 14 responses received, only two indicated they would be able to send crews so the regatta will **not** occur at that time. It seems that we underestimated the school involvement in the MAADI Cup and the lack of interest from Club rowers in having another regatta.

Two things have come out of this:

- 1 It was a great idea and there is a need for an additional regatta.
- 2 The timing is wrong and needs further consideration and some re-assessment.

Thanks to those who responded so quickly. We will take on board the comments and a formal reply will be available after the next SIR Management Committee Meeting.

Humour

One of those selling programmes made the habit of telling the older women to open the "centrefold" in private as it could have an inappropriate effect on them. Few waited and the responses not really repeatable here.

The there was a very pregnant Coach (2-3 weeks to go) who was told that she was supposed to stick out her chest to display the medal she had won.

