

NZWSRA President's Report for 2016-17 Season

Fellow Racers and Members,

As we head into our AGM for the next up and coming season I would like to run over the last.

The Exec had a pre-season meeting that planned the season and we also had some decisions to make regarding the Rescue Boat Trailer and also the bus with regards to having permanent power on board so we no longer had to rely on the generator. The decision was made to upgrade the axles and suspension on the Rescue Boat Trailer as it is now ten years old and was getting a little tired. This has made the trailer a lot easier to tow and has given it another life. Two years ago we got a quote to put some house batteries and solar panels in the Bus, so that we could run lap tops, printers and time keeping equipment without running the generator. We decided that this would be good move and has proven to be a great success all round.

The Mid Winter was again held at Brooklyn Ski Club and was a very cold and damp one. We had a reasonable turn out considering the weather, so thanks for braving the conditions and hope to see you all again this year

We started off our season with a new venue, for most of you, the Elbow Water Ski Club - we used to race there in the late 80s early 90s – so it was great to return to this part of the country. This came about from the vision of Nic deMey and was something that we talked about for a while and as you all know this was a fantastic weekend. We completed Series 1 & 2 on Saturday, in a sprint race format and had the 1st running of the Mercer River Race on Sunday morning. From all the positive feedback this was a great success and hope to see an event bigger turnout next season. Thanks again to Nic for his efforts getting this event off the ground.

Unfortunately the weather gods were not too kind to us this year having to cancel our Taupo series race and development day as well as the Twin Rivers. The Twin Rivers was a hard decision to make but the call was made under safety advice from the Coastguard and Thames Harbourmaster. Numerous phone calls were made in the 2 weeks build up to the event, as well as Kane Frost (thanks Kane) taking an afternoon to drive over and observe on behalf of the Exec. It is never something that we like to do but in the end it was the right call and something that was totally out of our control

The Bridge to Bridge was again a fantastic run event. This event takes up so much time to organise and run and if it was not for the efforts of Brad Dutton

and his team we would not be running on the river. From meetings with sponsors and councils, to organising Show & Shines and Corporate Hospitality and the list goes on. Also this year, having secured a boat from Australia was a great addition to the event, but again a lot of work went into this to make this happen. Then to have one of the oldest boats in the field, take out the win and break the record capped off an excellent weekend. Again many thanks Brad for taking on this time consuming and sometimes thankless job and to Kristen Dutton, we thank you for being a single parent through all of this. I would hope that at prizegiving both Brad and Kristen should not have to be a drink all night - just saying people.

We also saw the introduction of another new venue being Arapuni. This was met with positive comments from those who attended and the thoughts from you all was that you would like to try a two day weekend instead of the one day sprint that was held. Again thanks for the feedback and the new exec will take this on board and see if we can make this happen

Also this past season saw the running of the AO Championships at Karapiro. This was the first time that all 5 codes of water skiing were run in NZ at the same time. It was a well run event with some exceptional skiing. It would have been nice to have some more overseas competitors on the racing side of things, but it wasn't through a lack of trying from our side and there was still some great racing over the weekend. Well done to all those who took part.

One of my favourite events of the season was the 100 Miler. Every single class had good fields and both the 50 and the 100 had some good numbers, so was really interesting to watch. With some smart thinking from Perry and Kane to put it out there as a challenge to get some F5 boats to do the race, we had the introduction of a pit stop which added to the excitement in this class. Well done to you both and to Perry for taking out the F5 class by a very small margin. There were two other classes within the hundy that had some tight battles as well, the women's race was a great one, for first time for a long time we had 3 woman out there, with a win for Natalia.

The race of the weekend for me though was between young Max and the old boy Mark Priestly. It was a good race to watch from on and off the water and at the end it was Max taking it out in style. It was the first time for a single rig to win the hundy for a long time and Max was the second youngest age to win the race. It was also the first hundy win for Stacey, so well done to your team - top effort.

The Exec tried something different this season by moving the Nationals from Taupo to Mangakino and again this seemed to be great success and apart from one little incident, the event went off really well. There were some really good

races and everyone skied fantastic all weekend – it was a fun packed couple of days - well done to you all.

With that thought in mind just wanted to say thanks to all that helped with Natalia's accident. It just goes to show how we all pull together as a family when you need support at a time like that. Thanks to all.

At this time I would like to take a moment and thank the members of the Exec team. We had a fantastic year and made a number of significant changes that all were well received. We all worked well together and it was an enjoyable season without too many dramas. Special thanks goes to Brad Dutton and Alice Mellow, these two have been there week in and week out, countless phone calls, emails and texts and a lot of late nights, so that we all can go racing. I cannot say enough about them both for all the hard work they both put in this season. You guys are the best. Clare Dudding who has been quietly going about her very important treasurer job, keeping our books in line again. This is a position that takes up a lot of time and does not get a lot of recognition. We thank you Clare - our unsung hero. To Jordan Smith, our bus driver and part time storage, thank you. Kane Frost and Jordyn Woodmass thank you for all you help and support this season. Chris Carter was the silent member of the exec this year, as he only attended a couple of events due to work commitments and his email seemed to be broken a lot but thanks anyway Chris.

To the membership thank you all for a wonderful season. To Clare and Helen and all the time keepers, without all your help and time you put in we would not be able to race, so thank you. Emma and Brady and there team of judges for giving up your time. To the members who gave up their boats for course boats thanks. Graham and his team did a fantastic job – you are a very professional run operation.

To the rest of you and anyone who I may have missed or forgotten about, thank you all. We now look forward to sharing another great season with you all see you on the water.

Brett Flexman (Flexi)

President NZWSRA