



Chair's Annual Report

7th August 2014

Introduction:

It is with great pleasure that I present this the 7th Annual report for Aoraki Dragon Boat Association (ADBA). This report is presented at the AGM being held on the 7th August in Christchurch.

ADBA has enjoyed another very successful year bringing dragon boating to its members and the wider community.

The ADBA board this season was made up of the following:

Chair Meri Gibson
Secretary Noel Anderton
Treasurer Janice Melville
Boats and Equipment Peter Mitchell
Events Rick Smith
Junior Development Caleb Te Kahu
Special Interests Lorraine Flintoft
Development Rosalie Mehlhopt
Development Glenn Dickie

I sincerely wish to thank all the board members for their selfless and diligent contribution to the board this past year. They have served the board admirably with their knowledge and infectious enthusiasm. We as a board remain in very good heart; however we continuously strive to be better and to offer more to our paddlers. We certainly believe that we have done this in the past year and we continue to review our offerings and processes to ensure we are in alignment with our strategic growth goals and those of NZDBA the NSO for our sport.

Finances:

We started the financial year with \$16,301 in the bank; we finished the financial year with \$21,160 in the bank. There were some unpaid accounts as at year end relating to the South Island Championships which will lower the end total, but all in all another very good year.

We have plans to acquire a further fleet of championship boats so that we can hold major National and Trans-Tasman events over two days with a greater number of paddler entries, and will be making funding applications in the coming financial year to achieve this goal.

Our treasurer, Janice Melville will elaborate further on the financial situation in the treasurer's report. Suffice it to say that ADBA remains in very good financial stead and with careful and diligent fiscal management we will continue to do so.

Boats and Equipment:

We have been very fortunate over the past seasons to obtain funding to keep expanding our asset base, which enables us to put on more events for our members while also ensuring their safety. We fully utilised our new ten man boats this season with fun events and for training throughout the season. Our new IRB/safety boat

has been put to good use as both a safety craft and also to assist in the setting up of race course lanes and start finish lines. We are fortunate to have such good equipment available to us to offer better and safer events for our paddlers. Peter Mitchell will expand further on our purchases and the state of our assets.

Regattas:

We started the season with our traditional *Icebreaker* in December 2013 at Lake Pegasus. This event gives the teams an opportunity to see how they are gelling together, and for new paddlers it is a bit of a fun day to try out their new-found sport and to get over those competition nerves.

We also ran the now much anticipated ten man regatta racing at Akaroa on January 12th 2014. We had thought that by running the event two weeks earlier than last season that we may not have a full contingent of teams but that was not the case with more teams entering than the previous season. We saw our team from Greymouth come and join us and compete very strongly and also some of our Blenheim, *Simply the Breast*, paddlers also travelled down for the event, it was great to see these outlying areas represented. We were very lucky in that the weather again was fabulous and racing out in a harbour setting adds such a fun and challenging element to the day. The camaraderie of our teams and supporters, coupled with a huge spectator turnout made this yet again another fabulous event. One of our Tu Meke paddlers Alex McLeod carved beautiful trophy paddles for each winning team. I am sure these will be treasured in pride of place for those lucky enough to win one.



The *Aoraki Open* followed on the 23rd February – this regatta is a serious run for the build-up to the South Island Champs. The regatta was held at Lake Pegasus and there was good competitive battling out on the water.

The *South Island Championships* were held at Lake Hood, with another great days paddling on the 22nd March. This is such a good venue and we always have a very good day's racing on good water. And with such a brilliant venue we know that the teams will be very competitive on a level playing field. The South Island Champs signalled an opportunity to test run all of our new initiatives before the Nationals the following weekend, also to be held at Lake Hood.

The NZDBA Nationals hosted by Aoraki on the 29th March 2014 were outstanding with many teams saying it was the best Nationals they had attended. This is huge kudos and I wanted again to say a massive thank you to the board, volunteers and helpers who put everything into making this such a successful event. The number of teams who turned out was the best yet and the Aoraki member teams acquitted themselves exceptionally well with many medals staying in the South Island.

This year's presentation of the Julian Yee Memorial Trophy went to Rangiora High School who had entered a girls crew in the season

competitions. Avonside Girls High School the first the recipient of the Julian Yee Memorial trophy presented to the team that showed outstanding sportsmanship, camaraderie and general excellent attitude at regatta days were very pleased to see the trophy go to Rangiora as a new entrant to the Aoraki family of paddlers and were very happy to explain its special significance.

Avon/Otakaro:

ADBA has been very much a part of the discussions regarding the future of the Avon river and the desire for a water park in the central city. Noel Anderton has been representing ADBA at several meetings. He will expand further in his report on proposed outcomes.

Secondary Schools Challenge:

This initiative was launched in February 2013 under the steady leadership of Marie Childs and Terry Coyle. This was a 5 week training programme for high schools not already dragon boating. We had 6 teams join the programme which culminated in a challenge racing event on the 20th March 2013 with medals presented to the participating teams. The conversion rate of the schools entered was 100% to the new season which was astounding to all of us. We felt that with so many new teams in the 2013-2014 season we would not have the resources to repeat the secondary schools challenge in this season. We are very excited that these schools have all taken up the sport and we look forward to seeing them continue to compete on the water in coming years. They all performed exceptionally well.

Conclusion:

ADBA has enjoyed another very successful season with much added value for its members.

We are excited by the future of dragon boating with a number of corporate firms, schools and social teams interested in having a chance to paddle this coming year.

I am again thrilled to have been involved with ADBA since its inauguration. I found myself sidelined this season due to injury and was thinking it would be very dull not paddling, but I have had the opportunity to become more involved in an official capacity at regattas and in training school teams. I want to thank my board for being so supportive of me and my limited physical capacity. Your enthusiasm has buoyed me in what could have been a difficult year. The camaraderie of my board and the paddlers in the wider dragon boating community is exceptional and for me it is a great privilege to be a part of that.

I would sincerely like to thank each and every one of my board members for their dedication and commitment to not only Aoraki DBA but also to dragon boating and its growth, without you all, none of this would not have been possible.

Meri Gibson

Chair, Aoraki Dragon Boat Association

Secretary's Report

Aoraki continues to operate on a stable footing, while showing a responsiveness to paddler requests and feedback. Innovations like 'Ocean Racing' at Akaroa are being appreciated, but we are also considering ideas such as events at Lake Brunner.

Funding applications have been slow this year, but will need to continue if we are to 'life cycle' assets like the Champion Boats, and use them to grow the sport in other South Island centres.

Communications:

The aoraki-dragons.co.nz website has had a substantial rebuild as well as being regularly updated. The new design uses 'Tab' dividers to present lots of related information on the same page without excessive clutter.

Our Gmail continues to take numerous calls from individuals interested in joining a club, or starting new teams. And we have used [Google Groups](#) to send notification and Newsletters during the season, and a Race Pack is under development for this season. We have been approached by several groups wanting to start teams so these are useful resources.

Owles Terrace Earthquake recovery:

Aoraki continues to take a leading role in efforts by flat water sports to return to the Avon. At Owles Terrace, we have established ourselves as one of the 5 key buildings 'tenants' and are working with the Council to make the storage shed safe for storing our boats. As chair of New Brighton Waka Sports association we are ensuring the pontoons are repaired, and the ramp and tracks are maintained. We are also looking at how to best use the site, perhaps

expanding the available area and ultimately bringing more paddlers into the group.

One of the Waka groups is organising a roof between containers, so we will look to learn off their experience before following that path (at Owles or Lake Rua). Progress in buying containers etc has been slow, but the CEAT funding is still available. The group has been paid \$28,000 of the \$50,000 allocated, so Dragon Boating still has funds available.

Avon River Corridor User Group:

Aoraki continues to have a voice on the Avon River User group, which is now working with Sport Canterbury to establish a Trust that will drive the project to turn Red Zone land into a very substantial Flat Water Sports and Recreation facility. Aoraki's involvement with the Avon Ōtākaro Group has diminished (although we still are in contact with them), but our collaboration with Rowing, Waka Ama, Canoe and Kayak has strengthened, because this is where our focus is naturally leading.

Lake Roto Kohatu:

Unfortunately plans to set up containers and shelters at Lake Rua have not progressed, but we need to collaborate with the Council Ranger and Sailing School to improve paddler facilities at the lake.

Operations:

Paddlers, teams and organisers have worked together very well this year to make significant improvements in standards in the way the sport is run, particularly developing structure around areas such as Sweep Accreditation and Rules of Racing.

Noel Anderton, Secretary

Equipment Director

Aoraki is in a strong position with its assets that include 16 boats, 2 trailers, IRB & RIB, and an active board that has dragon boating at its heart and soul. We did spend a lot of money on maintenance and unfortunately on urgent repairs, which should have been avoided. Noel can confirm if the board have made funding applications for more boats to increase the fleet and/or replace the damaged boats. The boats (and sweep oars) are currently undergoing a rigorous maintenance program in preparation for the upcoming season so all (available) boats can be used for training

I'm privileged to have spent so many years helping move Dragon Boating in Christchurch out of the dark ages to a point where we are competing competitively on the international scene. My greatest concern is that some of our members don't share the same pride and care that the board do. And what I mean is that the boats are being damaged in similar fashion every year and that the same few people turn up to help the board when asked. It's not rocket science that without the boats or the board, there would be no dragon boating, so please make 2015 your year to help out and take some of the load off the board who are there for you in every way possible.

To finish, I would like to leave the board with another job to do – select a "Coach of the Year" for which I will donate a cup. I have a list of criteria for their consideration and it will be presented at the final regatta in Christchurch each year. The things to consider are:

- Team submission,
- Results,
- Attitude,
- Sportsmanship and
- Knowledge (of the sport, coaching, history...)

Good luck to you all, see you on the water.

Peter Mitchell
Equipment Director (outgoing)



Event Director's Report

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank everyone who has helped us put on our events this year. There are lots of volunteers, dragon boaters, and friends and family of dragon boaters who are always willing to step up and help when needed.

I strongly believe that this was our best year yet as far as Aoraki events go. This is our seventh year and we have learnt a lot along the way. We are very experienced now and we have good systems in place which enable us to consistently deliver high quality events. When we run a regatta everyone on the board has a role and plays it well. We have a large network of suppliers and service partners covering all aspects of the racing and after partying.

A couple of special mentions here. Firstly for Amy Wark who looks after crew loading and to Meri who did the starts at most of our regatta this year.

In addition to our four South Island events and the Nationals we also ran a corporate day for 6 teams in November last year. This was incredibly successful and everyone had a fantastic day. Special thanks to Marie Childs and Meri Gibson for organising this and signing up the teams.

In the regular season the *Icebreaker* was a great way to start. The turns race is fun and new paddlers learn that it is possible to keep going for a whole km.

Akaroa Super 12s is an awesome day out and the weather has been kind to us both times we have run it. It takes a big logistical effort to get all our

gear over there and set up but it is worth it. The ten man boat racing and the Le Mans starts are great to watch. This year some overly enthusiastic boatie hooked up our start line and dragged it off down the bay just as we were finishing setting it up. Setting up the finish line is easy. We do that when the tide is out and we just walk the buoys to where we want them. The



stressful part is hoping the tide comes in so we have enough water to race in!

The *Aoraki Open* at Pegasus ran really well again this year. The overhead ropes for the starts and the well-marked finish line make for even racing, and the "Yacht Club" platform makes for great viewing.

Lake Hood is where we hold the main events and this year we had the *South Island Championships* and the Nationals just a week apart. There was a tremendous amount of work done by the board members and helpers to get all the gear to Ashburton and back two weeks in a row. Special thanks to the members of Ridge Riders who helped us out with transport and set-up for both events.

Over the years we have fine-tuned the way we run these regattas and they keep getting better and better. The photo finish, the sound and communication systems, the race caller and the food vendors all added to the quality of the

events. We had a new location for crew loading this year which reduced the congestion and really smoothed the unloading and reloading of the boats both on and off the water.

The Nationals this year were one of the best in the modern era. We have had really positive feedback from many of the crews who raced there. We had more teams than ever before and with Amy on crew loading and the crews coming down early ready to load, we actually ran ahead of schedule for most of the day.

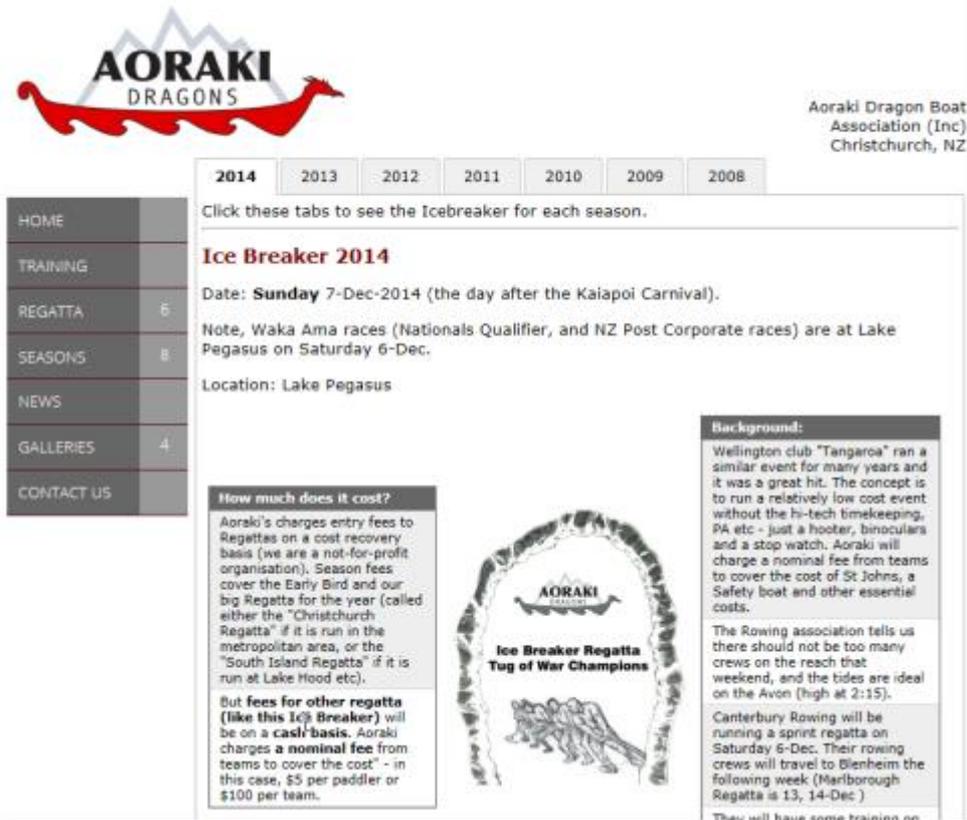
As board members we can't do everything on our own and we do appreciate the help we get from the teams. Even if you can't help set up or pack up there are a couple of things that all crews can do to make organising events easier. There is always a lot to do in the last few days before a regatta.

- Register for events by the deadline. If your crew won't be there then let us know. This is especially important for the ice breaker and Akaroa. Teams have been left out of the draw because we didn't know they were coming or that they had more than one team.
- Get your photo ID sheets in by the deadline
- Listen to the announcements on race day and get to crew loading in plenty of time for your race

2014 was a great year for South Island dragon boating!

The excitement is already building for another great season coming up.

Rick Smith, Equipment Director
Aoraki Dragons Boat Association



AORAKI DRAGONS

Aoraki Dragon Boat Association (Inc)
Christchurch, NZ

2014 2013 2012 2011 2010 2009 2008

Click these tabs to see the Icebreaker for each season.

Ice Breaker 2014

Date: **Sunday 7-Dec-2014** (the day after the Kaiapoi Carnival).

Note, Waka Ama races (Nationals Qualifier, and NZ Post Corporate races) are at Lake Pegasus on Saturday 6-Dec.

Location: Lake Pegasus

How much does it cost?
Aoraki's charges entry fees to Regattas on a cost recovery basis (we are a not-for-profit organisation). Season fees cover the Early Bird and our big Regatta for the year (called either the "Christchurch Regatta" if it is run in the metropolitan area, or the "South Island Regatta" if it is run at Lake Hood etc).
But fees for other regatta (like this Ice Breaker) will be on a cash basis. Aoraki charges a nominal fee from teams to cover the cost" - in this case, \$5 per paddler or \$100 per team.

Background:
Wellington club "Tangaroa" ran a similar event for many years and it was a great hit. The concept is to run a relatively low cost event without the hi-tech timekeeping, PA etc - just a hooter, binoculars and a stop watch. Aoraki will charge a nominal fee from teams to cover the cost of St Johns, a Safety boat and other essential costs.
The Rowing association tells us there should not be too many crews on the reach that weekend, and the tides are ideal on the Avon (high at 2:15).
Canterbury Rowing will be running a sprint regatta on Saturday 6-Dec. Their rowing crews will travel to Blenheim the following week (Marlborough Regatta is 13, 14-Dec)
They will have some training on

Ice Breaker Regatta Tug of War Champions