



Season updates

Well as you know, we had planned to have run our South Island Champs at Lake Hood by now (5th March in fact). But the dreadful events of 22-Feb meant that it has been dropped down the priority list.

Well we need to get back to normality at some point, so we hope you will agree that Dragon Boat paddling will give you a chance to release some of the stress that has been so hard to escape lately.

I can assure you that you do NOT feel any aftershocks when you are out on the water!

We have seven boats ready to go for training, just 20 minutes out of town.



Match Racing at Pegasus

Next weekend we will have our next event, albeit very informal.

On Saturday 19th March we invite all teams and individual paddlers to assemble at about 10 am. We will set up camp at an informal base at Pegasus Lake, around Kings Beach (on the nearer side of the swing bridge), near where the boats are stored. There should be plenty of parking along the streets and in the carparks.

If you can't get your whole team to come out, individual paddlers will be formed into teams with a minimum 14 paddlers per boat. Names will be drawn from a hat to determine who is paired off for the first round.

Round one is a simple knock-out series of two boats racing from a beach start across the lake. That is, load into two boats on Kings Beach, warm up across to our normal loading beach and back into the beach. One sweep will call the start and both crews sprint back to Kings beach. Loser is eliminated, winner goes to the next round.

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The second series has two boats starting with their noses abeam a buoy in the middle of the lake (between the two points).

One boat faces north, the other south.

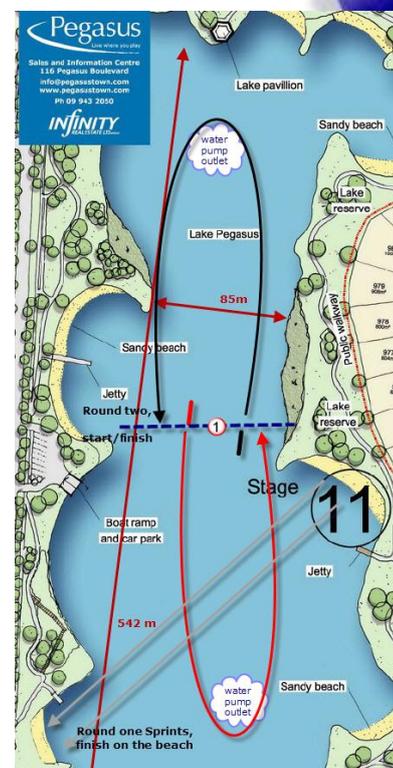
On the "Go" each boat heads in opposite directions and races around the aerator units floating in the lake, and back to the buoy.

First home wins. This is approx 500 metre racing, but if teams prefer we can race a complete circuit (i.e. around both aerators) and back to the buoy for 1,000 metre racing. Either way, this will give us good aerobic training and practice at high speed turns.

Last race should be around 4 pm, followed by an Aoraki BBQ. 'Prize Giving' might consist of a spot prize, in the form of a bottle or two – sorry, no major Bling...

We are keeping this like a mini-regatta/maxi training, so there will be no commentator or race timing. We will organise for a drinks cart and espresso coffee van, and maybe an Ice cream van. There will be no Portaloo's but there are toilets near the bridge. Teams are responsible for their own rubbish, gazebos/shades etc.

We might even see if we can organise a repeat of the Tug of War from the Super 12.



South Island Champs

Many of our teams will have made the trip to Rotorua for the NZDBA National Championships at the end of March. As you know, we have moved our own Regional Championships out a month. We have also had feedback from our paddlers that many are uncomfortable about being too far away from home, especially for three weekends in a row. So Aoraki has decided that we will shift the regatta to our more convenient location of Pegasus Lake.

As you know, Pegasus is a great venue with good viewing and access for boat loading etc.

We will have rope starts again for the Drummers, and extra lane marker buoys along the course.

The Prize Giving and After Party will be at the Kaiapoi Club, only a few minutes away from Pegasus, and on the way home. The Club can provide a range of food from the bistro for \$15 per head. They are extremely busy at the moment so they will have cold snacks (sandwiches etc) available at the start of the night and then bring hot savouries as things warm up. Hot food includes savouries, chicken drums, chips, samosas and spring rolls. Paddlers can opt for the restaurant which has a sit down 3 course meal for \$35.

Having this event closer to home will support the local businesses, and hopefully make life easier for our teams.

National Champs at Rotorua

We are counting down the days to the highlight event on the racing calendar for many teams. A few things your team will need to have in order (apart from the obvious travel arrangements and of course the training!):

- Make sure you submit your team list plus paddler photos to [NZDBA](#) RIGHT NOW! We know how hard the Secretary works to make up the photo sheets, and we DON'T want to upset him do we?
- After Party at the Rotorua RSA. Meals are available for only \$19 per head. Email the [NZDBA](#) with the number of people you would like pre-book for. Don't miss out!

Secondary Schools Nationals

Unfortunately there have been very few entries to the Schools racing this year. South Island High Schools continue to support this event very well, whether it is held locally or in the north.

Schools have been late at deciding whether to attend – and for Christchurch schools the reason is obvious. With their schoolgrounds and infrastructure in disarray, it is surprising they can think of sports events at all!

Aoraki appreciates the commitment that our schools have shown in the face of such adversity.

So NZDBA have had to make the hard decision of merging the Schools day with the Adult racing. Hosting just seven teams on a day hardly constitutes an event, so the combined day should provide much more exciting racing.

We (Aoraki and NZDBA) know this is very upsetting, and will take a lot of effort to change our arrangements, but we hope you understand how difficult the situation has become.

Ultimately having both divisions racing on the same day will be a more exciting spectacle, and produce even better racing.

See you on the water...