



Ready for a new season!

If you are anything like us, you are dying to get back into a boat. Aoraki has worked hard in the off season to get things ready so let's take a look at what has happened over winter, and what we can look forward to this summer.

Hail Aurecon!

Newest team on the block had a memorable introduction to Dragon boating at Lake Pegasus earlier today.

Aurecon Engineer Reon Tiweka had a lunchtime chat to a colleague a few weeks ago, and he mentioned that he might try his hand at starting a Dragon Boat team. Reon had already paddled for a couple of seasons with Waimak Attack, so knows a lot about what goes on in a team. Before long, many of his colleagues were saying "yeah, I would like to give that a go!"



Waimak founders, Rick Smith and Marie Childs have been helping Aurecon set up the logistics for the team, and on Saturday 6-October Reon and Dan Hunia gathered 20 paddlers at Lake Pegasus to see what shape they were in. Well after some wise teaching from some wise coaches, they pushed off for a few laps, and I have to say they already look like an experienced crew.

The afternoon was already a little cool, so the paddling warmed up the crew, despite the gathering grey clouds. Luckily they were heading back to King's Beach *just* as the hailstorm hit! No time for a debrief while they scrambled for warmth. But their broad smiles tell me they are loving the fun!

In this issue (click to view):

- Ready for a new season!
- Hail Aurecon!
- Sweep training
- Spring Festival on the AvON
- School Intro session
- Christchurch teams head to Asia
- Training venues
- Turns Races – how are they run?
- Schedule for the season
- National Champs at Rotorua
- Engineers hitting the water
- What paddling gear do you need?

Sweep training

Aoraki are running two Sweep School sessions before the season starts.

- First up is Tuesday 16-October at Lake Pegasus from 6pm.
- Then another chance (or consolidation) a week later on Tuesday 23-October.

Please Book for training via:

aoraki.dragons@gmail.com

We also need **paddlers (full crews or individuals)** to power the boats, while experienced Sweeps such as Rick Smith, Russell Stocks and Scott Johnson will provide tuition.

Spring Festival on the AvON

On 20th October, Aoraki will be joining with other recreational groups to promote the Avon River Corridor. We are right behind the Avon Otakaro Network's drive to ensure we make the best use of the damaged land in the east. And running *Give It A Go* type Dragon Boat sessions alongside rowers and canoe sports is a great start.

We would like to see plenty of experienced paddlers on the River, plus maybe 2 or 3 teams out there showing how it is done. There will be extensive advertising to get members of the public along, so this is a great opportunity for (a) early training and (b) recruitment. The event will finish with a race between a Dragon Boat, Rowing Crew, Waka Ama and canoe or kayak. How often do you see *that* happen?!

Two or three boats will paddle from Owles Terrace (leaving by 9 am) to Kerr's Reach in time for the Opening ceremony at 10. Please be at New Brighton by 8:30. We expect to finish around 2 pm.

School Intro session

Another of our local schools asked us to run an introductory session for their pupils. Westmount School in Templeton used the Dragon boating day as motivation for their pupils heading into final exams.

Then on Monday 24 September their three Houses had crash courses in the importance of teamwork, timing and a common purpose, as applied to water sports.

Well the 10 or so Aoraki volunteers who set up that morning were blown away by the energy, enthusiasm and inventiveness of these kids. As their lead teacher, Brendon Suckling said "that's one wonderful day" for the kids.

And we totally concur...

Christchurch teams head to Asia

After most Kiwi teams put away their paddles for the winter, two Christchurch school teams were still building to their 'big races'.

Scott Johnson had made such an impression of helping the California visiting team, *Aero Dragons* at last year's Super 12 regatta, that their Manager, Mary Melton, invited Scott to bring his Christchurch Girls High crew to the *World Collegiate Games*. So the CGHS Small Boat Crew flew up to the "Third Annual ICDBF Championships" in Jiaxing, China, racing from June 21-25. The International Collegiate Dragon Boat Federation is for full-time undergraduate or graduate college/ university students. They raced in 10-man boats, over 200m, 500m, and 2,000m.



Girls High finished a creditable fifth place in the 200 meters Women's (two races), and also fifth in the 500 meter Women's (again, 2 races).

But their best performance was to win Silver Medals in the Women's long distance 2km race.

This was a great opportunity for these Secondary School paddlers to race against some very experienced University crews, so **"Well done Girls High!!"**

Then a combined Shirley Boys High/Marian College team took a "Sharian" crew to Hong Kong to take on the Club Crew World Champs.

The experience of 'seasoned campaigners' Russell Stocks and John Fox paid off once again. *Sharian* was rewarded with a clean sweep haul of THREE SILVER medals.

NZDBA Equipment Director was assisting on Crew Loading, so was well placed to watch *Sharian* win Silver in the gruelling 2,000 meter race. They then went on to take Silver in the 200 metre sprints plus the premium distance of 500 metres. They faced serious competition from top countries in Dragon Boating, including two Australian crew, Singapore and Canada.

Team coach and Sweep, Russell Stocks developed a training regime that began immediately after their regular summer season finished at the end of March. They trained on the Avon River about 3 to 4 weekday mornings each week, hitting the water before sunrise - on the water at 6 am and off by 7:15. On the weekends they included 'harbour training' from Naval Point at Lyttelton - this allowed them to prepare for the wind, tide, chop and waves that they expected to encounter on Hong Kong's "Fragrant Harbour".

The transition from training at -3 degrees C in Christchurch to the draining 33 degrees in Hong Kong proved a big challenge. Similarly racing in relatively open waters of the harbour was a big step up from the relatively calm and sheltered waters of Pegasus Lake or Lake Hood.

Sharian had the opportunity to train in Hong Kong Harbour before racing started. While they had a 'capsize training' in training, their racing was incident free.

Sharian raced as a mixed 20s Junior team, meaning they have 20 paddlers, of which at least 8 (but no more than 12) are girls, plus a Drummer on the bow, and a Sweep (usually an adult) at the helm.

In the 2011-12 season, neighbouring schools Shirley Boys HS and Marian College formed a powerful Dragon Boating alliance under the shared name of "Sharian".

Training venues

Thanks to the Demo and Training day we put on for Westmount School in late September, we now have four boats at Lake Pegasus ready for training.

Currently there are six in the Owles Terrace shed (although only one is the right way up).

One of these will go to the fenced compound at the Kaiapoi River, and two will be available for training at Lake Rua near John's Road and Sawyers Arms Road. Please contact us to book your time and location.

Turns Races – how are they run?

At the Ice Breaker back in December, the turn's race was, as some have pointed out, a bit chaotic. For a start (excuse the pun) we sent all teams out at the same start time, meaning there was congestion on the first turn. Mind you, turns racing is designed to culminate in congestion on the final turn, or (ideally) the finish line.

For the Aoraki Open we will just have straight line racing, but at the South Islands and Nationals, we will send boats out in reverse seeding order (that is, slowest qualifying boat starts first) at 15 second intervals.

And there will be a five second penalty for any team that has its head in front of the start line before the hooter.

The other confusion was that some crews thought they should do all their racing in their own (start) lane, rather than all boats turning around the same buoys.

As for the rules of the turns, the following is from IDBF Rules. The overriding principle is that you must allow "clear water".

So as per Rule "R7.1 Correct Course and Clear Water. ... at least two (2) metres of clear water must be maintained around each boat. For the purpose of this Rule, the boat includes the crew's paddles and therefore the 'clear water' is between paddle blade and adjacent paddle blade. ... In races over 1000 metres, crews may deviate from their Racing Lanes or Lines without penalty, providing they do not impede other crews and clear water is observed around each boat."

The second rule that applies is R7.10 Turns. "... When more than one crew is making a turn, at

the same Turning Point, then a crew on the outside line must leave room for a crew on an inside line. That is, clear water between boats, as defined in Rule 7.1..."

Then R10.2 The Racing Lane and Line of Racing says "...The Line of Racing [down a straight section] gives at least six (6) metres of clear water from the buoys marking the left of the Racing Lane." So Sweeps need to allow about half a boat length from the left side paddle tips to the lane markers. This allows for...

R10.4 Overtaking. "Overtaking will be carried out to the left of the boat being overtaken" [except when the width of the Racing Lane allows crews to overtake in clear water to the right, or for the first 300m after the start, or coming OUT of a turn, or in the last leg].

Specifically, "No overtaking on the right is permitted once the front of an overtaking boat has passed the 50m Red Flag buoys, marking the approach to a Turn"

R10.4.3 says "A boat about to be overtaken must not alter its Line of Racing once the Head of the overtaking boat is level with or has passed the Steerer (Helm) in the boat being overtaken"

There are other rules about 'maintaining station' and so on but the above should be a good start.

Schedule for the season

Significant events this summer include:

Spring River Festival in conjunction with AvON (Avon-Otakaro Network) River Park, Saturday 20th October 2012. Kerr's Reach.

Ice Breaker - at Lake Pegasus, Sunday 2nd December 2012.

Super 12 - venue and date to be confirmed, but probably a Sunday in late January 2013.

Aoraki Open at Lake Pegasus, Sunday 24th February 2013.

South Island Champs at Lake Hood, Saturday 9th March 2013.

Twilight Races at Lake Pegasus, 19th March.

National Champs at Rotorua 6th April.

Then Sydney/Penrith?

National Champs at Rotorua

Recently, North Island Schools have not been flocking to Nationals, so NZDBA has had to merge the Schools day with the Adult racing. Note that Easter comes early next year so for the first time, Nationals will be in *April*. Specifically Saturday 6-April-13.

We are expecting South Island Schools will support this event very well again, particularly when they perform so well at the top level. And the prospect of a team trip to Rotorua is always something to look forward to.

Remember that you will need to submit a team list plus paddler photos for South Islands and Nationals, so get clicking now! We hear that there is an online registration system in the winds, which should make life easier too.

On a side note, the *Australasian Championships* will start a few days after NZ Nationals, at Penrith in Sydney. Over winter AusDBF have done a lot of research and planning to redesign this event, including opening it up to Kiwi Teams. You will hear lots more as this develops, but as a starter, there will be a couple of days of *Masters* racing, then a State-versus-State-versus-**KIWIS** racing, and then two days of "*Oceania Club Crew Champs*".

AusDBF and their States are super keen to see New Zealand teams cross the Tasman, so Sydney is a great opportunity to get in on the ground floor.

Engineers hitting the water

As you know, Waimak Dragons have shown tremendous growth these last couple of years, and one of their paddlers, Reon Tiweka, has decided to set up a team for the Engineering Consultants that he works for (see front page).

This should make for good competition against our other engineering team, Beca Crewsaders.

Meanwhile, another engineering consultancy company, Holmes Engineering has asked Aoraki to run a corporate team building afternoon for them in November.

Anybody would think there was a bit of engineering work going on in town lately!

What paddling gear do you need?

NZDBA are importing boats and paddles from *Swift* in China, and they are interested in supplying any other paddling products that teams might need. So tell us what you want? Does your team need specialised paddling shorts? What about paddle bags? How about electronics for analysing paddling?

If you let us know, we will find out if Swift can find us something worth buying.

And by the way, NZDBA are shipping a container from Swift (in China) to Christchurch this November (I wonder what is in it?) and they will be importing some wooden 202A Spec paddles for teams. Aoraki will also buy a set.

If your team wants to buy a set, we hear they are a HOT price.

Email us for details: aoraki.dragons@gmail.com

Next issue:

New developments in the Schools – we are launching a program to introduce more High Schools into the sport...

Racing the Aussies – their backyard or ours?

Sweep Accreditation – what will we need to know?