



## Launch into 2013-14

Aoraki Dragons is heading into it's *seventh* season <gulp, really?!> of running Dragon Boating in the South Island. In August 2007 we were simply paddlers from enthusiastic teams, when the organisers (Robin and Jane) called us together to announce they were retiring.

Well we have had a core of people on the board since then setting up some pretty solid systems, and investing in an impressive set of assets to keep it all going.

We are taking on some new blood and getting fresh ideas into Dragon Boating, but we still want to hear from you. The next opportunity for you to make yourself heard is at our Season Launch, which is on the **18th October from 6pm at Trevinos** Bar and restaurant. Trevinos is on Riccarton Rd, just by the railway lines on the right hand side as you come up Riccarton Rd from the hospital end.

We expect to see two representatives from each team at the launch. It is important that someone come along from your team as we will be talking about the new safety protocols and the sweep accreditation along with our usual season information. Aoraki will put on finger food and shout a few drinks at the bar also. Please advise if you are coming so that we can let the caterers know.

## UPDATED season Schedule

Our apologies but we have to modify one of our event dates. Shortly after sending out the last newsletter we had an urgent call from the Rowers telling us they had already booked Lake Hood for the same date as our Dragon Boat South Island Champs. We have been going over all the possible options, and our best result is to slide our South Islands back one week so that:

**[South Island Champs](#)** Lake Hood, Saturday **22<sup>nd</sup>** March 2014.

Note NZDBA had been considering the idea of adding a another day to the racing, because we were expecting several Australian teams to come to our Nationals, but we are back to "Plan A" – Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> only for racing.

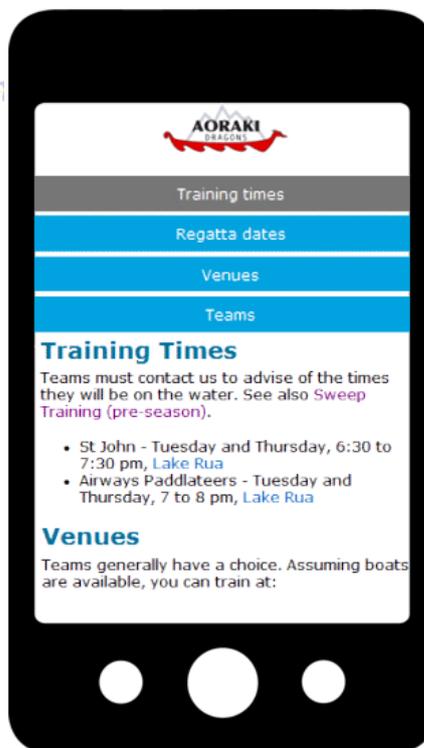
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## Aoraki website on the go

With so many smart phones and mobile devices around, we have found that our website is difficult to read on the small screen, so our web developer has been making a 'mobile version'.

The main site will soon have a link for visitors to switch to the mobile version.



Meantime,  
if your phone  
has a QR code reader,  
try this  
and see where  
it takes you



## New Brighton and Lake Rua

We were all set to finish our winter boat maintenance at Owles Terrace, New Brighton when we were hit by another 'after shock'.

Our operating plans have been turned on their head in June when we (Meri, Noel and Rick) met with fellow Waka clubs, Surf Life Saving and engineers from City Council to discuss earthquake repairs at the site. The land and buildings belong to CCC and were used as a maintenance base until they abandoned it some years ago. In the months up to the earthquake Aoraki had formed an alliance with Waka Clubs to formalise a Sports Lease on the site, but Council never got around to meeting with us. However they have always been supportive of paddlers using the base.

Council had done engineering assessments of all their buildings and at the June meeting they told us a "Level Two Rapid Assessment" showed the buildings are unsafe to occupy. Cracks are visible in the concrete block buildings and there is significant land damage, hence the buildings are "Yellow stickered". This means that we *cannot go into the buildings for safety reasons*. We still hope the Council's insurance money will be enough to take it from Yellow to Green.

Aoraki is working with Council and other users (several Waka Ama clubs plus SLS) to organise a day when we can get into the buildings and retrieve our gear.

Meantime Aoraki Dragons have formed a 'co-operative' association with other Waka Ama clubs plus the Surf Life Saving guys to come up with a recovery plan.

And thanks to the *enormous* support from **Christchurch Earthquake Appeals Trust** we now have funds to buy containers and semi-temporary roofing structures. Longer term, we have some grand ideas around Lake Rua too...

Meantime, we will make sure that our boats are available to teams that want to paddle! For a start, we have two one Champion plus a Ten Man boat outside the shed at Owles and the same (a 20 and a 10) are at Lake Rua.



[QUAKEAPPEAL.COM](http://QUAKEAPPEAL.COM)

## Sweep training and accreditation

As we reported in the June newsletter, NZDBA has set in place a sweep accreditation programme. All sweeps – regardless of experience – are required to be accredited in accordance with the standards set down.

It is a tiered system, ranging from Novice sweep, Restricted and Provisional accreditation, and then Full Sweep accreditation up to the Advanced sweep (Guru).

Aoraki has two representatives on the NZDBA Sweep Control Group (SCG); Russell Stocks and Rick Smith. They have been working in conjunction with the other representatives and the NZDBA board's delegated SCG chair of this group, Shane Petley. They are close to publishing the regulations regarding the differing levels of sweep certification. Aoraki, through our members on the sweep control group, have the discretion to award Sweep gradings taking into account prior learning. We believe that we will be able to take all of our sweeps through at least the first two levels with relative ease. There will be a written exam for all sweeps, once again regardless of experience. If this year's Nationals at Rotorua have taught us anything, it is that regardless of experience, in adverse conditions even the best of sweeps can struggle to get it right.

In the interests of bringing more Sweeps up to standard and in training new sweeps, Aoraki will run a sweep training school, starting on the 6th October with a classroom session from 11 am. This session, in a training room in Kaiapoi, will take about 2 hours, and will include a simple assessment with about 20 questions based on the material discussed on the day. The next training session will be on the following Sunday, 13th October, with the final session on the 20th October. Both sessions are at Lake Pegasus from 10 am to midday.

Please ensure that your sweep attends the classroom session at the very least. We are bringing on a number of new initiatives this year and we need to have a full complement of sweeps out on the water. It will be almost impossible to have pool sweeps available.

We now need your **nominations** of current and aspiring Sweeps for the *Theory* class. Please also nominate Sweeps for *Training/Certification* sessions on two Sundays. We also need **12 or so experienced paddlers** to provide stable paddle power for these on-the-water sessions.

## International Paddling

Local paddlers are using Dragon Boating as a great excuse to travel the world. And there is a vast array of events out there to tempt us.

That certain Hamilton-based team had a very successful campaign to the AusDBF Nationals and Trans-Tasman racing in April, and this is likely to mean we will have several Aussie teams coming across to Lake Hood later in the season. More competition, more paddling.

If you read the NZDBA Newsletter, you will know our Christchurch paddlers have travelled to Italy for the Vongalonga (along the Grand Canal through Venice) and in Florence. Several teams are also eyeing up the Italian resort town of Revenna for August next year when the Club Crew World Champs are on. Note that it has been **delayed** by a week (3 to 7-Sept-14) so that accommodation etc is at off-peak rates.

Whew...

## Waka they up to?

Dragon boaters are a pretty hardy lot and many miss their fix on the water in the off season. So it would come as no surprise then that a number of paddlers have joined up with Waka Ama groups and are out on the water in pretty much any type of weather conditions. It is not unusual to see Noel Anderton hop into the boat with the ABOL Amazons and have an hour or so on the water. ABOL Amazons have had a core of about 6 ladies out on the water on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. They have been convinced to enter the Waka event at Show weekend at Kaiteriteri in the novice section. It is great to see them having a go at this pretty physically demanding sport. A few Tu Meke paddlers have also entered teams in the event in November, so look for these guys at the start of the season looking pretty sharp and definitely in time.

## Safety Update

We have listened to your concerns and also taken note of what is happening with Maritime law and have made some changes to our safety regulations. More information will be given out at the season launch, but here are a few salient points.

After lengthy consultation and in light of the NZDBA ruling that PFDs (life jackets) are

compulsory at all National events, Aoraki has decided to make PFDs compulsory for training and all regattas from the beginning of the 2013-214 season. Aoraki has purchased a number of PFDs and these will be made available for use. We would however encourage each team to apply for funding to purchase their own jackets – wearing a lifejacket and how it fits is quite often a personal preference.

The other big news is that Aoraki have purchased a new safety boat, a 4.8 metre fully aluminium "Sea Surge" with a 40 HP Mercury Mariner outboard. Noel took it for a run a couple of weeks ago in the Kaiapoi river when Waimak Attack had a pre-season open day. Let's just say he was like a boy with a new toy... Taking into account all of the appropriate safety measures of course.

## Secondary Schools Challenge

We on the Aoraki board plus our Development Committee and helpers all really loved this exciting new addition to our event calendar. We had 5 schools competing in the challenge which culminated in a great day's racing and medal ceremony. And it was great to see some of our regular season school teams come along and participate on the regatta day.

The most exciting part is that we have all FIVE teams converting to the regular season of paddling. So that means we will have Rangiora High (which may be a mixed, boys or girls team dependant on numbers) Kaiapoi High, Papanui High, Catholic Cathedral College (all mixed, so a lot more competition for Hillmorton) and Rangi Ruru Girls join us on the water. There aren't many businesses that could claim 100% conversion rate from a sales pitch so we are very, very happy with this result.

We will be repeating this exercise again in the 2013-2104 season. We will target those schools who showed some interest in the last event, but were not able to put a team forward. We are only looking to bring on teams who did not paddle in the last event. This will be another challenging time for those of us involved in the coaching, training and sweeping of these teams, but I have to say that the enthusiasm and respect that you receive more than makes up for any other hardship. If you would like to be a part of helping us to grow the sport through our youth, please feel free to become involved – it is lots of fun.

## Corporate Challenge

Not to be outdone by the Secondary Schools Challenge success, Marie Childs who is heading up the Development Committee has come up with a Corporate Challenge concept. This will be open to all corporate organisations and will be a one day event only. We hope to have engineers facing off against each other. Let's see if the accountants can beat the lawyers. And who can hammer out a win between the construction companies? This will be a full day event with teams welcome to bring along their corporate tents, banners etc. They will participate in training in the morning. There will be family fun and a series of 250 metres races in the afternoon.

We encourage the existing corporate teams to also show up in the afternoon and let them see how it is done.

Trophies will be up for grabs, so if you work for a corporate and want to see them out there having a blast, then encourage your workmates to get a team together. The cost is only \$250 for the whole day, so it's just \$10 per paddler.

## Crossing the Cook Strait

A number of our teams love the festival atmosphere of the Wellington Regatta. Due to clashes with other events in the city, the organisers have had to bring the date forward to the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March.

Should your team be interested in going up to Wellington to compete in this event we can access free ferry tickets for you. Please let us know and we will put you in touch with the organisers of the event.

## Festival Of Flowers

Aoraki Dragons has been asked to get behind the "Avon - Spring River Festival". Last year the flat water sports groups ran a mini regatta at Owles Tce and we are keen to see it up and running again, on **Saturday 2 November**.

This year we start with a mini-regatta at Kerr's Reach from 9 am to about 11 am, featuring the "Inter Code Challenge Trophy", plus a chance for public paddlers to join in. We had planned to flotilla it to Owles Tce, but we have heard that the Avondale Bridge area is impassable.

At noon there will be will be an Opening ceremony at Owles Terrace, a Parade from Owles to New Brighton followed by a 1 pm Music Concert.

The aim of the festival is to showcase the vitality and potential of the east as "Ōtakaro: place of the game". Local community events will be connected and promoted within the festival.

This is an opportunity to highlight the collaboration between all the sports, and to highlight the opportunity and also the challenges. If we can show heaps of activity on the river, it will highlight the need for a Flat Water Sports Facility in the City.

Contact Caleb Te Kahu on 027 232 7576 if you are interested in hopping into a boat. We think Avonside will again participate and maybe a mixed crew of Ridge Riders and some others.

