

Auckland Dragon Boat Association Annual General Meeting Chair's Report 2022-23

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1. Executive Summary

The 2022-23 season brought its fair share of challenges and triumphs. Despite the Auckland floods and unforeseen weather events, the dragon boat association continued to demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and determination. This report highlights our journey through the highs and lows of our season, showcasing our achievements and showcasing the true spirit of dragon boaters.

2. Introduction

As a dragon boat association, our mission is to promote, facilitate and develop dragon boating within the Auckland Region. We build our reputation on good sportsmanship and having a passion for making dragon boat racing available to everyone.

3. Challenges Faced:

Our season took an unexpected turn with the devastating Auckland floods that disrupted our plans and impacted operations. As we strived to rebuild our crews and rekindle our competitive spirit, we were forced to confront the stark reality that the post-pandemic landscape required us to take several steps back.

Events and training sessions were cancelled, the winter series struggled due to the times of the tides, some teams suffered with lower numbers of returning paddlers, and our finances felt the impacts due to the refunds for events.

The shortage in volunteers, disruptions in supply chains, and the safety protocols posed obstacles that demanded innovative solutions, but our dragon boat spirit remained unbroken.

And of course, the low number of school participation this year impacted our income to front foot next year's season.

4. Opportunities and Triumphs amidst the chaos

Amidst the chaos, we found many moments of triumph that reinforced our belief in the strength of our community.

We were all on a learning curve this year with the transition from Sporty to Revolutionise Sport (Rev Sport); which is a significant stride towards enhancing our operational efficiency. Purchased by NZDBA, the Auckland region is championing its implementation, and it is home of our revamped website and the integration of online management system. It is now our central hub for managing regattas, coordinating activities, and simplifying invoicing, procedures and team management.

The confirmation of SafeSwim's lead scientist that dragon boating activities were assessed as low risk invigorated us, even though this news came at the end of the season. Additionally, a Watercare project hopes for improved water quality in the future.

Our trip to Kai Iwi Lakes training camp tested our bonds as a dragon boat family, working together with no team siloes and just jumping in a boat to enjoy our sport. We further bonded through working together to gather flyaway tents when the weather took a turn for the worse.

Despite the cancellations and disruptions, we embraced the challenge by expanding our paddling opportunities where we could through weekend training, Rep Training, and Polar Bears, turning dragon boating into an all-year round sport. The additional paddling opportunities has enabled people to prepare for the Pan Pacific Masters Games, bringing home a series of medals from the Gold Coast; the National Championships, bringing home the Representative Regional Trophy and medals, and the World Championships.

For those who paddled throughout the winter season, I would like to extend my gratitude to those who came back and trained for their team, for their friends and for their sport. Whatever reason you returned; we are privileged to have you paddle with us.

The low numbers at our last Winter Series event allowed to us to try something new and introduce the exciting relay races, something we've never done before.

We tackled boat restoration and navigated through boat repairs, upgrades, and transportation improvements as a team to ensure our fleet of 10 dragon boats and support boats were ready for Regional and National events.

We procured pontoons for the Regional Championships and saved essential funds. In hindsight we know they were not the best, but at the time, we needed to save as much as we could due the cancellations of our other events.

Despite the lack of school participation this year, we introduced adult small boat racing to our regionals event, which proved successful and enjoyable for our crews who struggled with crew numbers for the season.

Lastly, celebrated an influx of new members this year through a give it a go day held just after the Night Lights Event held in May last year.

5. Acknowledgments:

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our members, volunteers, and supporters who have been the pillars of our strength throughout the season.

6. Call for continued support:

As we conclude this season and look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, we extend an invitation to all enthusiastic and believers in the power of dragon boating. The committee takes on a lot of tasks to enable the sport we all love and do a great job, but when our resources have more than one portfolio to manage between their full time jobs, family and life, are time is stretched and makes it difficult for us to enable growth that we all want to see in our sport.

We are bidding farewell to some of our committee members, we invite new faces to join us in delivering our strategy for this coming season.

We are unable to continue with the Auckland Dragon Boat Association without a key member of the team; the ADBA Secretary, so we are seeking someone to take the reins and step up to the challenge.

Election of officers and committee include:

- ADBA Committee Secretary
- Sports Coordinator (Paid position - Part Time. Fixed Term for 6 months)
- Safety Officer
- Equipment Administrator

Other roles as part of a subcommittee include

- ADBA Drivers and towers (Equipment)
- Handy Dragons (Equipment)
- Vendor Liaison (Events)
- Events Liaison (Events)
- Corporate Liaison (Events)

7. 2023-24 Season

We hope to continue to rebuild our membership through going back to the grass roots: Uplifting our current members to train as sweeps and officials, promoting our sport, building school participation, facilitating more corporate splashes and give it a go days. We also want to ensure our events are staffed sufficiently, so as of the 2023-24 season, we will seek volunteer nomination for each event from crew. I look forward to your support with our goals.



In closing the 2022-23 season was one marked by unprecedented tests of our spirit. Through the storms, floods, and unforeseen disruptions, we united and became more determined than ever.

Thank you for your support and dedication.

Holly Claeys

Chair | Auckland Dragon Boat Association