

## Ruataniwha Update May 2025

As has been the case over the last few years, when events for the season are completed a number of work projects begin. The last event for the season was the New Zealand University Rowing Championships held over Easter and the following week contractors moved on site to begin the eagerly awaited irrigation system upgrade.



*1 The view back to the finish shows the start of the mainline trench*

Stage 1 of the project will see all underground piping installed and sprinklers installed in priority areas, namely the grassed area in front of regatta control, the newly planted bunds behind the tent sites, the lawn areas at the entrance including the vendor area, the boat park, launch bank and the concert area to the north of the bund. As funds permit there is potential to purchase sprinklers for the trailer park and the spectator bank beyond the rope fence.



*2 Contractors back filling the trench at the finish line*

Work is progressing well and includes the purchase of a new pump, owing to the failure of the previous unit. Although installation will be completed by mid-May, the system will not be commissioned until September, with winter on the way it is thought unwise to charge the system only to have to drain it for winter frosts.

### The Epic 9 Day Working B

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 38 of our volunteers completed a mountain of work, although not all could stay for the total period with weekends being the busiest, a hard core group stayed for the whole event. During that time they were well fed by the Kitchen team who were led by Francis Dennison. Fresh baking for smoko breaks, hot soup and cheese rolls for lunches plus delicious evening meals meant the despite a week of work many would have gone home a few kilos heavier than when they came. Roast lamb was a hit while Blue Cod and paua supplied by Geoff and Wendy Taggart was a treat. Charlie Crampton managed to reduce the Canadian Geese population while he was there and casseroled goose breast was also on the menu.

A huge list of jobs was produced for the week with little expectation of completion, however, not only were almost all jobs completed, some identified as a wet day task still remains to be done, but due to the wonderful autumn weather all outside jobs were completed plus a few more added over the week.



*Ready for work, a team of Lincoln University Students swelled the numbers during the first weekend of work*





*Early ground preparation, volunteers weed the area in preparation for planting*

One of the larger projects was the completion of the planting along the bunds at the back of the tent sites. Sophie Strachan has lead this project which began with the reshaping of the bunds this time last year.

In total 1500 native plants and 96 trees were planted over the week. Unfortunately for the team, favourable growing conditions recently meant a lot of weeding needed to be done before the planting could take place. South Island Rowing is indebted to Upper Waitaki Water Zone (UWWZ) Committee for their generous grant to purchase the native plants. We are equally grateful to a number of our supporters who purchased trees, in the near future we will place plaques at the base of the trees to recognise the contribution.



*View looking back along the bunds towards the finish. Once established they will make a great back drop to the tent area*

The upgrade of the boat park has been a two year project, initially the wilding pines were removed to create space for additional racks, then existing racks had to be progressive moved to make the space more uniform. Lastly 70 new steel uprights needed to be installed to significantly increase boat



*View of the boat park, newly re-sited racks in the foreground and clear blue sky behind*

park capacity. During the working B, the last of the existing racks were re-sited and 20 new uprights were added. Unfortunately when the old racks were reconfigured it was identified that we were still 6 uprights short. They are now ordered and will be in place for the new season.



*A fresh coat of paint for the seating while others admire the quality of the work*

Painting was the order of the day for many of the team. While the judging area in regatta control was the main focus, a number of the seats round the complex got attention as well.



*Welding stabilising supports to the doubles racks*

Another significant job for the week was the cleaning and painting of all the demarcation buoy lines around the course. While the course buoys are cleaned each year, some of the other buoy lines had that neglected look. Geoff Taggart and Charlie Crampton with others removed the buoys, then bought them back for cleaning and painting by the shore team. The Didymo in the lake makes this a messy job but Robyn Crampton lead a team of determined scrubbers and painters to bring them back to life.

There were numerous other tasks undertaken during the week, unfortunately many will go unnoticed, but never the less are essential to keep the course looking smart and running smoothly. The wood that keeps to accommodation and social areas warm for example has to be cut, split and stored so that a good supply of dry wood is on hand. A big thank you goes to all involved.

If you are reading this and thinking you would like to assist, the next working B is the 9-17 of August, our aim is that the only cost volunteers should incur is their time. Accommodation on site is provided as are meals and a contribution is made to travel costs. Contact the writer if you're interested. While the working B is spread over a week, most will only be able to attend one of the weekends.

### **What's Coming Up?**

Working B – 9 to 17 August

50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> September. "We're planning a bit of a do." This will include a get together after the meeting with finger food and refreshments provided. Some short speeches about recollections of the early years will be the only formal element. Mark it in your calendar, we will call for indications of attendance closer to the time for catering purposes.

R2k/Interprovincial Champs - Sat/Sun 20/21<sup>st</sup>

Boat park Toilet Block – the board is currently costing an additional toilet block for the boat park which we hope to have in place before the next Maadi Cup. Details will soon be available to the associations to ratify the expenditure.

Prepared on behalf of the Board by

John O'Connor

Executive Secretary

Mob: 027 248 6010

[Mailto:john.oconnor@outlook.co.nz](mailto:john.oconnor@outlook.co.nz)