



# Meridian South Island Rowing Inc. Newsletter



**March 2017**

Now that the regatta season is over, we can take time to reflect on the season that has just passed. We can remember the good times and the occasions things did not go our way. While the windy weather had a profound effect on the regattas it also affected the training throughout NZ. We know that some Clubs and Schools have found things very difficult in that respect but it has been noted that the rowing complex here at the lake has allowed training on most days.



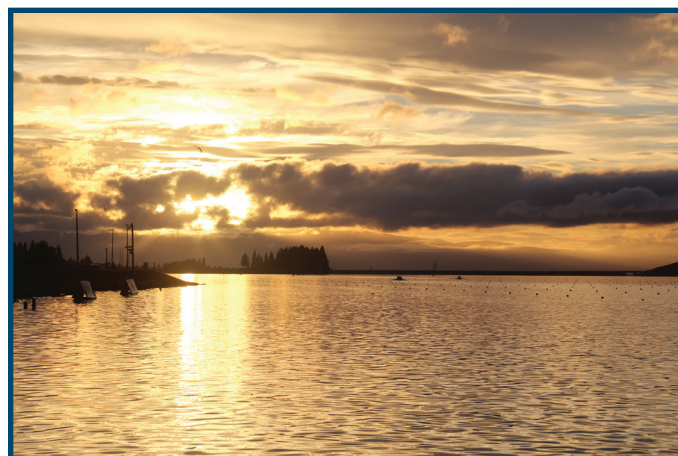
The picture above was taken on the Saturday at the SISS Regatta and was just typical of the weather experienced at that time. While this affected the flow of this regattas the lake remained calm with little current or wind. It was cooler making it rather unpleasant for some of the spectators. But, the water conditions were ideal and this gave rise to some very competitive racing.

Now is the time to prepare for the off-season repair and maintenance work as well as finishing off some of the much-needed projects. The next significant function at the lake will be the South Island Rowing Inc. Annual General Meeting that is timed for Saturday 13th May 2017 in the MacRae Lounge starting with morning tea at 10:30am followed by the meeting proper at 11:00am.

## NZ Rowing Championships

Given the recent weather, it was with some apprehension we approached this regatta. The picture on the right shows the start of the day with rather ominous clouds appearing. The first day was cut short because of the wind but after that, things improved considerably with the regatta being completed on time.

The highlight was the fast finishing eights. The picture (left overleaf) captures the situation just short of the finish line. Being RPC Crews it is not immediately obvious which one is which given the colour assortment of the row suits. Someone said they looked like "licorice allsorts". But looks aside, the winning crew made the 2000 metre dash in 5:32 which is said to be the fastest ever on this lake. Some of the older officials can remember when they waited for a crew to break the 6:00 minute mark!







The picture above right shows the camera barge which was following the race. It also shows the second and third place getters cross the finish line. While the camera barge captured the on-water action, the media also interviewed some of the crews as they got off the water on route to the medal presentations. This is shown in the picture (below left). The lake conditions can also be seen and the relative calmness contributed to the success of the regatta.

All regattas have their amusing moments. The picture below right shows one of our Officials having her first ride on the “trike”. One wise crack was made, “where do I hang on?” Of course, not all amusing incidents can be caught on camera. During the medal presentation one particularly tall rower was told that he did not have to kneel before the rather short lady medal presenter to receive his medal.



## South Island Secondary Schools Regatta

This was the last regatta of the season. The weather again featured being much cooler than the previous weeks and also very wet. But the water was flat and that made for some very good rowing.

The two pictures on the right show the supporters from one school. The top one shows the action with the one below showing the justification of that support with a significant win.





For most of the weekend it was simply too wet to have the medal presentations on the Dais. But that did not stop some crews paying a visit to the medal collection area under the dais. The picture on the right shows the medal winners from one event who gathered for pictures after getting their medals in spite of the weather.

The picture below shows the supporters at the medal presentation area on the Sunday. While the weather had a dampening effect, the enthusiasm was quite evident.

As an aside, the under 18 eights managed the 2000-meter dash in 5:59. Again this is a relatively fast time on this lake for an U18 crew.



## Volunteers

Volunteers play a vital role with running the regattas. We take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your efforts at the SIR Regattas. The Otago and Canterbury Associations likewise thank you for your assistance with their Championship Regattas. The picture below shows many of the volunteers at the NZCC Regatta.

It is really encouraging to see more younger volunteers becoming involved with the various aspects of the Regattas. This was especially so where more trainee umpires are coming on board as the more mature amongst become less able to undertake the full range of duties.

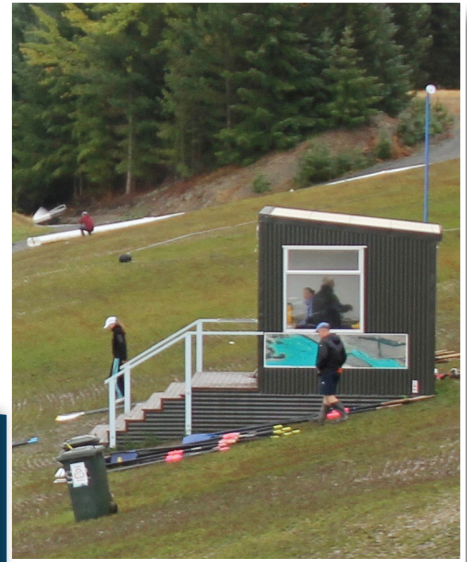




## New Numbers Hut

The new numbers hut has been mentioned in previous newsletters and it is great that we were able to get it operational for the SISS Regatta. We thank the NZSSRA for their kind assistance with this facility.

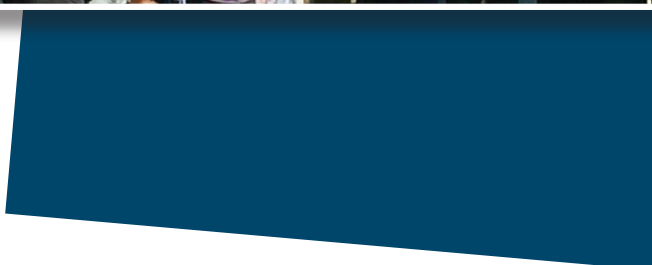
While not complete at the time of the SISS regatta, it was operational and there is not a lot of finishing work required in readiness for the next season. Our thanks go to Darrel Purton, Bryan Wall and John Bishop for their continued assistance with the construction of the Numbers Hut.



## Other Facility Uses

While the primary use for the facilities is rowing, many will know there are a number of other activities these facilities can accommodate. One such use is a venue for a get-together of a club, association or group of like-minded people. The picture above shows the sponsors' night gathering.

Another use is for weddings. The picture below shows the formal ceremony on the dais. The wedding "breakfast" was catered for in the MacRae Lounge by Catherine Wilson and her team.



# Boat Launch Area

While a lot of work was put into the boat launch area to provide a grassy slope to the water's edge, the impact of the rain on recently planted grass was obvious. The picture below left was taken on the Saturday and shows the very sodden and marked area where rowers took their boats to and from the water. It was especially noticeable around the numbers hut.

The following week saw the rain stop and the ground start to dry out. The picture on the right shows the extent the ground has been cut up. It now appears that the area will be rolled and re-sown in time to capture the autumn growth.



## From the Board

### Safety Risk Management Plan

The revised Safety and Risk Management Plan (SRMP) is now in its final draft. The Board has been considering its implementation. In view of the large amount of documentation required, a proposal for a “software solution” that will be “cloud” based using smartphones is being considered. If the software solution is successful, there could be significant spin-offs for other clubs and local associations. It is certain that there is much yet to be done as SIR faces its responsibilities and obligations under the various items of legislation.

### Projects

Following advice from one of our readers of the newsletter regarding the use of Cofferdams, we are now in the process of completing the start installation for lanes 9 & 10 in readiness for the trolleys.... more in the next newsletter.

The wastewater project is now in its final stages with most parts now operational during the recent regattas. The reinstatement and clean-up activities are under way.

The numbers hut is almost complete. The surrounding grounds also need further attention.

There are a number of other areas requiring attention and these will feature in the next newsletter.



## Regatta Duration

The SICC regatta is a very large regatta and was not completed. We have found that using 10 lanes will help but will not solve the problem. Options are being considered and will be presented for discussion at the AGM. One consideration since many of the schools are still having their Christmas break, is to have the school age races on the Friday and making the regatta duration over three-days.

The SISS Regatta also is difficult to run over 2 days. There are already restrictions on entries, progressions, hours of racing and the requirement to use only 8 lanes. The most recent SISS Regatta was completed but to do that we had to obtain an exemption from the restrictions to enable us to run the 123 heats at 4 minute intervals; then allow a one hour 50 minute gap, and a further 17 final races on the Saturday with 10 minutes between 'A' finals. On Sunday, a further 56 races were run again with 10 minutes between 'A' finals. The real concern is that even without many of the restrictions it only takes a small weather event to completely disrupt the regatta.

We look forward to having more flexibility in this area as a result of the NZSSRA AGM.

## Finance

The 2016 SIR accounts are being completed. The intention is to have them reviewed before their release for the AGM.

## Feedback

This year four pupils from the Twizel Area School were selected as the medal bearers for the NZ Championship Regatta. Given the activity around the dais, it is always difficult to obtain suitable young people for this work. In this case, the young ladies were impeccable in their behaviour and a real credit to the School. We are also very grateful and impressed with the dedication of the young boat-holders! Thank you Twizel Area School.

During the season, we received many complimentary remarks about the facilities and the regattas. Of course, we had a few the other way as well. But we have received a number of suggestions that have really helped forge some ongoing improvements to both the facilities and the ongoing operations. Some of this relates to the implementation of new technologies and it is becoming clear they need to be adopted. It seems the only real limitations are our ability to accept and embrace the new technologies and obtain the necessary funding. We sincerely thank those who have been so helpful with their suggestions and welcome any ideas readers may have.



Any contributions, comments or correspondence for this newsletter or website should be forwarded to the Secretary. ([secretary@ruataniwha.co.nz](mailto:secretary@ruataniwha.co.nz))

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