

End Season Forum - 8 May 2019

We thank all those who attended the end-of-the-season forum and for contributing to the discussion. Set out below are notes capturing the main issues raised and responses made on the night – they are not meant to be read as formal minutes.

The notes have been distributed to the Board and will be considered.

Concern:

There have been multiple incidents of rowers being arrogant/abusive towards other lake users.

Comments:

- Suggested we should approach the go boaters with a list of suggestions to give to the inexperienced boat drivers.
- Pointed to the need to create opportunities for positive interaction with other lake users (possibly including inviting the Water Police to talk to clubs).
- Argued that most rowers and coaches were courteous but bad behaviour was more likely to be reported.
- Suggested creating flyers and posters to educate rowers about all the different types of lake users and how they work/their limitations (ex. SUP can't turn quickly etc).
- Suggested creating a summary guide of watercraft to present to the NCA which summarises their limitations/challenges for anyone wanting to use the lake.

RACT

Agreed to send out an all (registered) rower note on the issue of tolerance and courtesy.

Agreed to consider how known offenders might be approached. Noted that some of the issues had been with the NTC rowers which had been dealt with already by the HP coach.

Concern:

Visiting schools & general congestion in January holiday period.

Comments:

- Concern was expressed around the safety issues of visiting rowers not observing Lake rules and protocols.
- Suggested that such visiting clubs were important and perhaps local rowers need to provide welcome and guidance while on the Lake
- Issue of registration of visiting clubs raised.
- Have an online induction, including tips such as "If you want to do a tech session, a good out of the way place is here", "if you want to do a time trial, try and arrange it for this time" etc.

- Need to be clear about whether RACT is then responsible for visitors not obeying the rules if there is an incident.
- Possibly have RACT EO go and speak with all visiting clubs/schools
- Possibly restrict rowers to one end of the lake during the balloon festival

RACT

Pointed to the guidance under Visitors on the website. Provides a resource for hosting Clubs.

Will continue to pursue the visitor club registration concept.

Concern:

Multiple issues around regatta structuring (dates of regattas and then events on the day) were discussed

Comments:

- Concern expressed that the Regatta sub-committee should meet at least 3 times a year as specified in the By-Laws.
- Suggested more frequent meetings would help manage issues throughout the year. This was important as some requests to the Board were referred to the regatta sub-committee.
- The lack of minutes from the last regatta sub-committee was raised.
- Suggested that a Regatta Subcommittee meeting be held soon, to review regattas on a whole (not to set dates for the regattas). This meeting would also set dates for a minimum of 3 subcommittee meetings throughout the year, more as required.
- Suggested wide circulation of the agenda so that members of clubs could input their position to club executives
- Clearer system for if clubs called for around calling the regatta subcommittee.
- Schools indicated that they generally favoured more short schools regattas, where they believed that parents would help, with separate masters regattas. Schools also suggested having all quad regattas to shorten the schools' regattas.
- Suggestion was made that because of the criticality of the regatta secretary, and the advantages of having the regatta program finalised on Monday rather than Friday, that a paid regatta secretary position should be put in place.
- Concerns were expressed over the impact on BROs of more frequent regattas.
- Question raised as to whether a BRO should sit on the sub-committee.

RACT

- Noted that there were no minutes from the last regatta sub-committee as there was no EO at the time and no volunteers to take them. Previously regatta sub-committee minutes were circulated
- Noted that clubs could approach the Chair to ask for further meetings.
- Expressed concern over the impact of more frequent regattas, even if they were smaller and if there was more help from school volunteers, as experienced BROs would still be required. BRO fatigue was regarded as a serious issue.
- Indicated that it was looking at the possibility of moving the closing day from Friday to Sunday.
- Noted that it had in the past had a paid an entries secretary position but it did not allow the entry time to be extended, as it still required consultation with the Chief BRO and refinement.
- Noted that the sub-committee already provided for a BRO member and at least one participant was a senior BRO.
- Emphasised that it was critical that clubs actively engage in the regatta sub-committee to achieve optimal outcomes.

Concern:

Regatta Grade score system.

Comments:

- Concern that objectively derived scores can be overridden.
- Concern at the score implications for school rowers where they aren't able to race longer distances in Canberra who then face the longer distance in Penrith.

RACT

Noted that where a score is changed it is done for reasons, which are available on request.

Other issues:

- Suggestion was made that RACT should arrange a coffee van in the light of the length of coffee queues and the poor coffee quality.
- Clarification was sought over club access to Rowing Manager.
- The late timing of the ACT Championships. Discussion suggested that later gave school students a chance to transition to clubs and race as club members and suggestion that some regatta option after Nationals was maintained.
- Suggested that some BROs were very curt with new rowers and coxswains which could dent their confidence.
- Concern that there were not publicly available standards/channels for students to consider trialling for the program.

RACT

Will explore whether there are any restrictions on a coffee van being present.

Will ask BROs to be particularly mindful of new crews earlier in the seasons.

Indicated that athletes are encouraged to contact HP staff to discuss options. Will look to clarify standards and improve communication with schools and school athletes.

Other comment:

- Thanks to Stuart for his work, particularly great communication with the clubs.
- Having two quad races for the lower grades has been appreciated.
- Being able to have tinnies at Weston Park was great.
- Schools appreciated having the schools' regatta in November.
- David and Vince thanked for their work pending their retirement from the Board.

Rowing ACT

11 May 2019