

Presidents Report 2015

I would firstly like to thank the RATS committee from the past 12 months – we have had a year of trialling new initiatives and also doing some “house keeping” as well as keeping our local training functioning and putting on successful events. As always we are totally dependent on volunteers and we would like to take this public opportunity to thank each and everyone for both their time, thoughts, comments and overall commitment to keeping RATS as a successful local club that serves its community.

Historically it seems that triathlon fever waxes and wanes, a few years ago we had a big group attempting their first IM – this year we have seen more interested in the Xterra style of triathlon and we had athletes competing at Xterra Rotorua and the National Cross Champs on Motutapu, from this there are RATS now going to Hawaii at the end of the month for which we wish them an amazing trip and race! Hopefully some of the photos are shown where else we have been out and about!

And so to training ...

Essentially pool swimming has stayed the same with a wide variety of sessions covering the athlete new to the sport to those heading for race placing. Many thanks to Clarrie for his unfailing enthusiasm. On Tues and Thurs mornings he has a regular band of followers who appreciate his time and energy. We also have sessions by Alan and Henk, concentrating on style, skill, endurance and speed. I personally could never make the 5.30am starts and prefer the more acceptable hour of after 6 or in the afternoon but these lanes are always full and the reports surrounding them are good at the swim breakfasts.

We had a successful introduction to OWS plan – with pool sessions and a fully supported lake session. These were well attended – although it was a very chilly dip. We spoke last year of the decision to give the Aquathons a break - this we did but we found less cohesion for the club and a missed opportunity to facilitate the club camaraderie, an important part of why we exist – later in this report I can explain our plans for the coming season which addresses this and other concerns.

Spin was again successfully run throughout the winter by Sam at Waiariki – this is well supported and keeps the legs turning over and heart rates high. It also brings in new members and provides support to those new to the sport. Bunch rides have been heading out, smaller numbers than previously but this improved as the weather warmed up. We did offer the “Top of the Lake TT” based out at Alans house – this is a great opportunity to race yourself with the winner not the first to cross the line – the last of these for this year is on Saturday – it would be great to see a good turnout and there is hot drinks and biccys to finish. There are now plans for some hill work to start this week on Mount Ngongotaha.

As discussed at the last AGM we stayed away from any planned training for running, many of our members take advantage of other groups set up specifically for this discipline.

Our trial this year was the “Mini tri training sessions” – based at the lookout end of the lake. These proved successful – allowing both children and adults to take part at a level that worked for them. We were able to keep the kids off the road and safe whilst also providing them with lots of encouragement. Having a proper transition set up and simulating race conditions over 2 distances

seemed a positive move and we are planning to expand on this over the next few months. Hugh also ran some kids training at the Redwoods to give the kids more practice before each tri.

Our traditional events have continued – with consistent numbers at the Winter Du's with the new course designed by Karin and Lee-Ann being reviewed favourably and an increase in youth involvement by offering an alternative run in the short course. The Kids school duathlon was overseen by Leonie and with high numbers again we appreciated the fact we had brought in Tim Farmer and NDURO to assist with organisation and the actual timing of the event. Sport Bay of Plenty offer assistance and a link to the schools but there are areas which will need attention for the development of this event next year – the club will also be looking for a new organiser with Leonie stepping down from this role – we thank her for all her hard work to date.

The BLMF took place in January, thank you to Nicki and Margaret as the 2015 organisers and all those who assisted behind the scenes – numbers remain steady and the weekend was successful. Unfortunately, we did not receive some of the grant money we have previously, but this did not affect the running of the event, just the normal profit margin – we do have contingency funding for this and there were no ill effects to overall club funds. A number of issues did highlight the need for some clearer guidelines for both organisers, athletes and supporters. The calibre of the athletes is high, with some using it as a significant training event and we need to recognise the competitive spirit exists at this level as well as for those where the BLMF is their first ever triathlon or lake swim. We need to ensure we have an acceptable balance and the event continues to serve our local tri community. 2016 is the 30th Anniversary with Nic Muggeridge as race director and some experienced faces volunteering to help, we look forward to an awesome few days racing.

In the off road department – Oli Shaw and Lewis Ryan combined forces to put on more Xterra training – rave reviews came from this and we hope this will become a regular part of the RATS calendar. With multisport and adventure racing in mind – Rory organised some orienteering training, and helped to put together some teams for the Whangamata Adventure Race, there were also teams at the Manawaheu Race, hopefully this can be built on over the next year.

Ohope remains the club champs with a good turn out again this year. The family friendly picnic remains popular and Ohope even consulted us over the date for 2016 – which is 28th Feb.

Unfortunately the annual dinner did not take place over winter which means currently the awards have not been given out. The committee have looked at the reasons why there was less interest in this social event and have some new suggestions for the future including moving the event to be after the end of the season around April. The committee will continue with this work.

The winter talk did take place with Cati Pearson presenting Nutrition 101 – this was well attended and everyone gained useful information based on dietetic and nutritional science combined with Cati's own knowledge and experience in the realm of triathlon and multisport.

We continue to volunteer at 4 events other than our own to support club funds – these are the IMNZ / The Ultra and The Marathon aid stations as well as marshalling at the Moonride. These provide a useful income whilst not exhausting our volunteer pool that are needed for our own marshalling needs.

As for house keeping – we can thank Graham Perks for his determination to sort out the new club kit – this has taken many hours and decisions by both him and the committee but hopefully it will be out very soon, so members can see what it looks like in reality and then purchase whatever they like to wear – with the new provider we have a multitude of options and hopefully something to suit everyone. Once it gets going the turn arounds should be 6- 8 weeks as long as we have an order for a minimum of 10 items.

The club also has new signs – these are designed to stand out from any others and makes it easier for us to be responsible for putting them up and down. And the final big news is the recent move to being able to totally internet bank – yes we finally have a new system that allows us to pay direct into accounts rather than always using cash and cheques – the constitution has been altered to reflect this change – this process still requires 2 people to complete the authority.

We have given out a number of financial awards over the year, keeping the same criteria as previously – and we wish these athletes success at their nominated races.

So finally just some news about the next few months, hopefully you have looked at the flyer we have put out – the current committee have set in motion the idea of Monday nights being Club night at the lake – we have given out the plans for you which show a rolling program of a swim night / aquathon and mini tri. We hope by having a set night we can recapture some of the club feel and increase participation at training because everyone knows there will always be something on. We are also running a “Its all about racing” event this Saturday afternoon – aimed at practicing drink bottle exchanges, working on the drafting rules and overtaking, slick removal of wetsuits and answering any other questions that come up, currently it looks like this will be well attended and so please come out and support, either to learn or offer advice – it is from 3-5pm at Damar on Eastgate Industrial Estate (right opposite the NZ Fire training centre).

So with this I would like to thank the club for supporting me as President over the last 3 years and as a committee member prior to that – it has been a good experience and I hope we have remained true to the goals of the club throughout this time. I would like to extend both my own and the members thanks to all the committee who are retiring this year, including Irene who as a life member of the club has clocked upyears on the committee andas treasurer. I wish the new team all the best and on-going success.

Tri NZ held the AGM last week. Going forward there is a new focus on club involvement with the role of **Community Development Director – Anna Russell** - Anna's principle role is to connect, develop and support the Triathlon communities in New Zealand, this will be enabled through the following key priorities:

1. Own and lead the 2020 TriNZ Strategic Pillar – **Sport Development** – “Targeted Strengthening of community participation and delivery structures to lead the customer value proposition”
2. Own and lead the end to end triathlon pathway/experience from 5 – 85yrs. Lead and enable collaborative activities via strategic local delivery to grow the participation pathway
3. Grow Triathlon collaboration & participation via Clubs, Coaches, Events, Regional Sport Trusts (RSTs), Schools and other National Sporting Organisation's (NSOs)

She will specifically oversee Tri NZ participation, membership, Club, Coaching, Technical, Event Sanctioning programmes. Many including our own club felt this has been lacking from our governing body and it is good to see it being addressed. Anna has been in touch with the club, and will look at discussing this further in the coming months.