



Newsletter from the Board – October 2023

It's been wonderful to see the spring weather arriving – from a selfish perspective it means that the Porritt Track renovation is less likely to have delays. There is a lot of action at the stadium and we are excited to have a new track in 2024.

This newsletter is to update our community about things going on in our region, as we start the summer season. This is the first time we have used Game Day for this newsletter - with the intention of it reaching a wider audience and allowing the Centre to communicate more clearly with our athletes and volunteers.

There have been some teething issues with Game Day and these have been fed back to Athletics NZ who are working on them. We are aware how frustrating these can be,

AGM and New Board

In August AWBOP held our AGM. Notable information is that we managed to return a surplus for the financial year, we awarded life memberships to **Murray Green** and **Heather O'Hagan**, and have a new board. To read more about these two people you can refer to this link

<https://athleticswaikatobayofplenty.org.nz/2023-life-membership-awards-and-service-awards/>

We also awarded four Service awards:

Graham Dudfield – Hamilton City Hawks

Noel Bennett – Taupo Harrier Club

Fay Smith – Athletics Tauranga

Kevin Bradley – Hamilton City Hawks

It is always rewarding to award our volunteers - and we are lucky to have some very committed people within the athletics community.

Board/Operations

We have a new board in place after the AGM. The new board is:

Sally Kerr Chairperson – Sally has been on the board for three years and has a background as an administrator in Childrens Athletics (originally at Hinemoa).

Andrew Langman President – Andrew is passionate about Childrens Athletics and has had a long association with Cambridge Athletic Club.

Ben Kennedy – Ben comes to us as an Appointed Board Member with an interest in secondary school sport and sports administration

Bruce Cortesi – Bruce is a coach and an athlete with Athletics Tauranga

Inneke Cumming - Inneke is a parent of athletes and is involved with Secondary School Sport in Taumarunui.

Iain Rattray- Iain is both a Masters Athlete and a parent of teenage athletes – and is involved with Hamilton Hawks.

The Board's role is governance rather than operations, ensuring athletics is sustainable and that we support our clubs, volunteers and athletes within the region.

Connections Conference

In September Athletics NZ held their conference and AGM in Palmerston North. The theme of the conference was connections and we heard from speakers about ideas how to help clubs and squads to thrive, and what youth are looking for in terms of training and support.

We had a group from our region attend from club representatives, to our Coachforce Officer, to Board Members and our community.

From our region there were some significant awards:

- **Service Awards** to Peter Blackwood (Whakatane), Cliff Thomas (Fairfield) and Lynette Lochhead (Te Puke)
- **Merit Awards** to Debbie and Criss Strange – two people who have made a significant contribution (and continue to do so) at a National and Regional level as coaches and events.
- **Life Membership** was awarded to Dianne Rodger – Dianne is one of a very small group of people who have this honour and it is well deserved. Dianne has served club, centre and ANZ over many years as an athlete, volunteer and staff member. It was good to see her surprised!



Here are some photos from the NZ Road Race Champs - held on a glorious sunny Manawatu Day. We had a team of 23 competing.



NZ Cross Country

In July the NZ Cross Country was held in Spa Park, Taupo for the second year of the cycle. It was a cold but glorious weekend – with a wonderful effort by the Local Organising Committee in Taupo.



Dates for the Calendar

Here is the link for the summer season. Due to the track resurfacing requirements there are no Open Meets at Porritt before Christmas but there are options in Tauranga and in Auckland.

<https://athleticswaikatobayofplenty.org.nz/competition/events/>

Strategic Day Feedback

In June we held our Strategic Day in Cambridge – it was an interactive day with lots of feedback both in advance and on the day. Some key themes came through:

1. The need to link better with schools
2. Emerging technology
3. The need for additional support in Development and Events.
4. Better information – pointing people to information that is out there.
5. The challenges with officials and volunteers - and getting people to do these important roles.

There are also things for the board to work through in terms of our planning and direction. To help this, the Board would like to run club forums to provide a way for clubs to communicate and share information.

The first one will be on Sunday October 8th at the Childrens' Meeting – with the topic of where do you need support – either resources, training, committee members, gear etc If you are involved with a Childrens Club please consider supporting this meeting to share information and knowledge.

In addition we are currently recruiting for a Development and Events Coordinator and hope to finalise that recruitment in a couple of weeks.

Waikato Youth Squad

Debbie Strange has held three sessions to date with topics being - **Overview of project and planning; Physical Abilities – What Do We Need In Our Athletic Events? Assessment & Improvement; How do I handle my nerves on Competition Day?** with 25-35 athletes and coaches attending each session. We are delighted to have her coordinating this pilot group and hope to roll out more fully.

Officials

We are facing an ongoing issue with a lack of officials in our region. Please consider training to become a C Grade Official or helping out at events. If you want training please contact Dianne and we will arrange this. It can be as big or as small a commitment as you wish it to be.

AWBOP athletes selected for World Championships results

World Track & Field Champs 19-27 August, Budapest

Sam Tanner (Athletics Tauranga) 1500m 8th in 2nd semi final

Tori Peeters (Hawks) Javelin 13th place

World Para Track & Field Champs 8-17 July, Paris

Lisa Adams (Lake City) **Shot Put - 1st place**

Danielle Aitchison (Hawks) **100m and 200m - 2nd place 100m; 1st 200m**

Alan McDonald - Coach with NZ Para team

World Athletics Diamond League Final - Eugene

Tori Peeters - 2nd Javelin 61.30m

Sam Tanner - 11th Mile 3:46.51 - his time being the 2nd fastest on All Time NZ List behind Sir John Walker

AWBOP athletes selected for NZ Teams

2023 Pacific Games Honiara, Solomon Islands from 19 November – 2 December.

Diana Ismagilova (Hawks) Triple Jump

Mariah Ririnui (Athletics Tauranga) 100m, Long Jump, 4 x 100m

All the best for the start of the summer season!!