

Presidents Report 2012 – 2013 Season

I took over the Presidency of the PNZ at the first meeting following on from last years AGM. It would be fair to say that it has been a challenging year. The Board has comprised of 4 elected members and Richard Turfrey was seconded for the year.

Our track record in looking after our volunteers continues to look a bit dismal. In the past season we have lost the services of Michael Emerson as Director of Coaching and also John Degueldre as Umpiring Director. I would like to thank both Michael and John for their input in their specific roles. Both have a level of knowledge that I am hoping will not be lost entirely from the game.

The Board held a training session on the Swiss System earlier in the season in Auckland. Michael Emerson led officials from around NZ in this training. Arising from this the PNZ developed a format that we will follow for all our national open tournaments to ensure consistency and certainty.

Another initiative launched recently is to develop a database of those members who are prepared to put their hand up for particular tasks that will hopefully support the expansion of the game.

One of the big issues from the membership has been around communication and while I believe there has been some progress in this area there is still work to be done. Sarah Jane has spent significant time attempting to streamline our processes in regard to communication via the website as well as taking a more direct approach with the APA. Di has maintained an ever changing membership database to ensure that communication through the clubs is more effective. Graeme Morris has been appointed by the Board as editor of the Petanque magazine. He has planned some interesting articles for issues in the future. He is always on the lookout for contributions to make this publication more relevant.

Growing the game domestically continues to present us with a number of challenges. In this respect it is good to see that a group in Auckland has begun a series of tournaments for more social players. The youth is an area we have made a little progress in. The establishment of the Panmure Pioneers, with the support of Andrew Mailei may assist in growing this group in the Auckland area.

It was with a significant effort from various members of the Board that the youth Tournament in Auckland was able to proceed. I am grateful to those Board members and officials from the APA as well as to the chaperones and coaches from the South that spent a considerable amount of effort to prepare their players.

We send our first youth team overseas to the Trans Tasman this year. This has been a goal for some time now but for a variety of reasons has not occurred. The closest we have come is when our youth played a specific youth tournament at Epsom many years ago. We are hoping to build on this particular tournament so that it becomes a permanent part of the Trans Tasman event. While on the subject of Trans Tasman I would like to congratulate all those players and officials who have made up delegations to the various international tournaments throughout the petanque season. I would like to acknowledge the players who have just come back from the Oceania Tournament. While you may be disappointed in the eventual results I am sure you gave your all.

The PNZ receives many invitations to international tournaments and are often asked why we are not sending a team or why we have not planned to send a team. International petanque is often not very organised and we receive few details. The upcoming Pan Pacifics is a classic example. While we knew it was on we did not have knowledge of the host country and date

till quite recently. Even after we had accepted the invitation there was a change of date due to the "King" of Brunei being out of the country. The Women's World Championships are in a similar situation. It is due to be played in Tunisia in October but this has yet to be confirmed and there have been murmurs of a change of venue. Due to this lack of information from the international organisations the PNZ occasionally gets criticised for circumstances beyond our control.

The feedback that we are getting from a number of players and officials regarding the selection process is quite heartening. While this can be a contentious area the general consensus is that the process is rigorous and fair. The selection process is attracting arguably our best female and senior players, however it does not seem to be as successful in getting many of our open men involved. I believe this is a real pity as our game has evolved and improved considerably at the national level. This was evidenced by the win of an all NZ team at the NZ Open. I look forward to receiving suggestions and ideas on how we can develop greater competition for places in all NZ teams. I am fully behind those players who have put themselves forward this year to represent our country. I know you will make us proud.

Being on the Board can open you up to all sorts of criticism on several fronts. Unfortunately at times this can get quite personal. As a Board I believe that we have fronted up at times when we have screwed up or miscommunicated. We do not profess to be perfect and will continue to make mistakes. I encourage you to hold us accountable for doing the best for Petanque and petanque players in NZ but please focus on the issue rather than attacking the person. Clearly you are a diverse group and what is right for one section of our community may have a slightly adverse affect on another. Unfortunately one size does not fit all.

I would like to acknowledge the many years of service that both Diane Findlay and Lorraine Brock have given to the game. They have both been a part of the PNZ Board since this new structure has been in place. Prior to that both Lorraine and Diane served on the council. I am hoping that neither of these two players are lost to petanque either on the piste or in administration roles in their local clubs and associations.

I also want to thank and acknowledge the huge workload shouldered by both Brian Smith and Barbara Whittington. They hold the secretary and treasurer role on the Board presently. They are a mine of information and support the board ably with their "institutional knowledge"

I am looking forward to working alongside the new Board members, Alan Heron and Stefany Frost. They will bring many skills to the table to move our game forward. I am also pleased that Richard Turfrey and Sarah Jane will be returning to the board and able to carry on some of the initiatives of their previous term. With the support of the Petanque Community I am hoping that the new Board will look more like a construction crew, strategically creating new pathways and structures to develop our games, rather than the fire brigade spending time putting out fires and dampening down hotspots.

I am reminded of a Maori whakatauki that I think is quite relevant at this time.

"Naku te rourou, nau te rourou ka ora ai te iwi" translating to mean with your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive.

In our petanque context I take it to mean with your contribution and our contribution the game will thrive.

Dirk Winnie
PNZ President