

PERSONAL PROFILE

Peter Reaburn

History in Waka Ama

My introduction to waka ama was in 1991. As with many paddlers at the time, I came into the sport from dragon boating and it didn't take long for waka ama to take over as my passion – a passion that has remained undiminished in the 15 years since.

Paddling-wise, I have attended every national sprints since 1992, have competed around the country and also overseas in Australia, Samoa, Fiji and Tahiti. I have also visited clubs in Hawaii and California and have attended four World Sprints.

In terms of administration roles, at club level I was involved in setting up the Waitakere Outrigger Canoe Club in 1991, and have been actively involved in the growth of that club ever since.

I chaired the establishment committee of the Auckland Region 1994/95, including liaison on region's establishment with NKOA, drawing up of the constitution, incorporation and setting up club/ AROCA structures and meeting procedures. I was the first President of AROCA 1995 – 1997, and had a further term as President 2000 – 2001. I prepared the original AROCA Strategic Plan in 1999, and its update in 2001. I managed the setting up of the AROCA 10k series in 1995, and was a member of the AROCA committee up to my time of being appointed Vice President of NKOA in 2003. While, since then, I have felt it important to separate my NKOA role from an active involvement in AROCA, I continue to be a supporter of that Region and its initiatives.

As far as NKOA is concerned I attended many NKOA meetings and AGMs from 1992 on. I was an advocate for setting up a regional structure for waka ama administration in NZ and assisted in drafting the new constitution in 1996 which set up the administration structure we have today. I made many submissions on behalf of Waitakere and AROCA to NKOA, including a comprehensive redraft of the NKOA Strategic Plan in 2002.

I was appointed NKOA Vice-President in 2003, and from then on had various roles chairing NKOA meetings, redrafting the NKOA Strategic Plan, introduced a NKOA structure involving portfolio responsibilities, arranged a national W6 waka register and numbering system, assisted in a rewrite of the constitution and race rules, assisted in arrangements for 2004 World Sprints in Hilo, and produced a range of NKOA information.

For the 2006 Worlds I was a Worlds Committee member, selection committee member, the selection convenor and NZ Area Co-ordinator.

The Future

I've been around the sport long enough to have realised four important things.

First, there is a very limited resource of administrators. I have personally invested a lot of my efforts into trying to progress the sport and will continue to offer my services in whatever capacity they may be valued.

Second, no one person, or even one committee, has all the skills. A huge task we have is engaging resources to fill in gaps we don't have expertise in. I think we have a way to go and I would like to think that we, NKOA, the regions and the clubs, can be a bit more professional and

effective in what we do. If we can't do that as a committed team, our sport won't continue to grow. Part of that is having trust between the different administrative levels of the sport that we all have the best interests of our sport at heart. I very rarely see personal agendas, and long may that continue to be the case.

Third, there are rewards, even in being a boring administrator. I thought on many occasions, in the past 18 months especially, "why am I doing this??" In the end that question was answered through some of the wonderful people I got to know through the Worlds campaign, people I came to admire beyond belief for what they contribute to the sport, who were prepared to compromise their wishes to a common goal and who also offered support to me when I needed it. Those people are priceless and deserve themselves to be supported if, as we all should hope, they will continue to offer their services.

Fourth, but certainly not least, I am still a paddler, and intend to keep on being one. I feel that I represent what paddlers want to get out of the sport. That is good organisation, support to become a better paddler, a bit of recognition in what you achieve, and a welcoming and accommodating culture, no matter what ability you have, or where you come from.