

# Checkpoints



An occasional word from your Chair - Rod McKinnon...

I was sorry to miss the AGM. Now that the campaign for club elections is over I thank those candidates for the Chair who did the 'Justice Ngcobo thing'. Let me assure you that I have no aspirations to constitutional change that would secure tenure of the Chair for longer than it takes to update the Honours Boards.

I will write *Checkpoints* occasionally to update members on matters relating to the business of ourClub.



There are four checkpoints in the classical rowing training exercise, so I shall limit myself to four items, which will save you time staring at your computer, extend the useful life of your eyeballs and save me from getting RSS. Please send me a message on our Facebook page if you want more explanation of anything that follows – WHAT! You didn't know we have a 'page'? Get with it! and go to: [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4633028538](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4633028538), like I did last week.

While on the subject of modern comms, don't charge off to the web site yet, it is a work in progress and give us another month before you peek in anticipation (no, don't follow your temptation, please, unless you are studying *volunteerism and the contemporary challenges of current date relativity* for you latest PhD). We will let you know when we have upfixed the site to full interweb glorification.

## Checkpoint #1: Your Management Committee (Manco)



At our first Manco meeting held on July 11th Shaun chaired as your Captain duly elected unopposed and then moved over smartly as the elections for other posts were concluded. In case you do not know who is who in the Manco Zoo, here goes. You have got me, the undersigned, in the Chair.

We have **Nicolette Hayes** as Hon. Secretary and **Graham Hubert** as Hon. Treasurer.

**Charlie Lewis** is Vice Chair and as an ICT brainiac is also responsible for communications, the Page and aforementioned Site.

**John Sokolsky** represents the interest of the WPYL, since he is not yet 35. He will be working hard to grow his constituency through fine oratory at all Club meetings and in each pub he visits every Friday night. He promises not to lower the tone of discourse and will never compare one Master's style to another on a Sunday morning.

**Graham Hutchins** is your rep at Wemmer Pan Aquatic Clubs meetings and will manage other functions, including the next Winter Clinic. Also, call him for cool kit.

In case you have forgotten, the 'Hon.' in the two important titles above indicates Honorary status; no salary and in WPRC, not even an honorarium. So when Graham sends you your subs invoice this week please pay; all funds go directly into our bank account with no discretionary diversions or new houses. And when Nicolette reminds you to BAKE cakes for Sprint, know they will be eaten only by the fee-paying hungry comrades-in-rowing. Nothing will end up in the trough. And we are hosting a

2-day Sprint in October so the masses will need to be fed well, just like at election time, so please start baking now.

I need to pause for a manifesto comment before we move onto the next checkpoint. We have elected **Shaun d'Hotman** as our Captain and I have observed an imperialist tendency among us: it seems that we have developed a counter-revolutionary post colonial revisionist meaning for this post of Captain in the Club. When we say 'hello Captain' only a true cadre of avoidness recognises the



coded reality. We mean 'hello captain, maintenance man, trailer tower, regatta entry manager, Sprint super hero, course maintenance fellow, boat allocator, Junior regatta supervisor, Gauteng Rowing Association (GRA) rep., GRA RowSA rep., motor boat mechanic, tea urn turner-on, and oh-which-blades-go with-this-boat and who-has-changed-the-rig-on-this-boat-since-I-rigged-it-3-years-ago?'.  
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So thanks **Pete** 'tickle my ribs' **Heidstra** for agreeing to take on all course responsibilities for at least the next two years. He will be installing a completely new course thanks to Lotto (we got in before all the spare cash went to Cosatu) and will need help to get it all done before Sprint on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October. So hands up when he looks your way, he ask for nothing more that a bit of time and will reward you with a warm feeling of accomplishment in building the best course in the country, second only to his other one up North.

And I also thank **Jonny** 'le spectre' **Cluver** who has taken up the equipment maintenance management responsibilities. He is also going to draft boathouse housekeeping rules to get discipline back into use and control of our impressive fleet. Just remember the old adage .... that has something to do with *les spetres* and log books and blades being put back in the right rack every time and so on.

## Checkpoint #2: Priorities and plans



At the first meeting your Manco got down to some planning, which is always better than working. We are at a low point as you will have noticed with the smallest entries in living memory in regattas and for the Long Row and with insufficient income from subs to cover our running costs and none for wild living and sushi parties. Some of our problems are quite obvious but we needed to sort them and then prioritise them.

We have the thinking work available from me in .pdf files if you want to have a look. The results are predictable but are important so that we avoid the big buoys as we make our way down the course.

We have drafted Goal and Purpose statements to focus our work:

Our **Goal** is that WPRC celebrates 110 years as a resurgent rowing club based at Wemmer Pan.

Our **Purpose** is that WPRC is a vibrant, financially sustainable rowing club with income levels that exceed annual non-discretionary costs and those to equip the fleet for recreational and competitive rowing for all members.

Our **working objective** to meet these is to have sustained activity in all Divisions with enough members in Junior, U23, Open and Masters Sections for sustained competitive and recreational activities.

So we plan to recruit members with a regular intake through the year. We will create a club atmosphere to retain members by growing participation in all our activities and maintaining our fleet for full use.

We have identified 5 plans that we will develop over the next three months, in no particular order:

1. Recruitment.
2. Communications.
3. Events.
4. Coaching.
5. Equipment & maintenance.



You may be asking why it will take us 3 months to draft these plans, why not by next weekend. The answer is Sprint.

But we are making progress on them:

- Sarah our Coach will soon be on the water again in a new coaching boat, thanks to a donation from Graham Hutchins (thanks, Graham);
- John, Sarah and Jacob are drafting a manual for our upcoming Sunday Clinics so that all of us who volunteer to do a couple of hours on a Sunday will coach the same stuff in the same way – the Wemmer Way!;
- Pete is ready to start work on the course; and
- Jonny's housekeeping will materialise soon.



### Checkpoint #3: Sprint

Our Club is 100 years old this year. Six mining companies gave surface water use rights to the WP Sailing Club back then and rowing started formally in 1920. So we are the custodians and inheritors of the original rights and want to celebrate with the other clubs here at the Pan. After the last two Sprints at which we had to cancel some races in the tight programme (85 races in a day!!) we have been asked by the schools to hold the regatta over 2 days and are happy to do that.

We are planning a programme for the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October with some canoe events mixed in and dragon boats to finish off on Sunday early afternoon. We are planning an ox braai on Saturday night to celebrate.

So.... Please diarise the days now so we can put on a historical Wemmer event.

I am co-ordinating advertising and sponsorship and we have set a target of R 100 000. Please attempt to get **just one** advert this year and we need them tied up in the next 4 weeks. Please call me to discuss your ideas - I don't normally issue my private number but will make an exception for this year - 083 327 0138.

Charley is co-ordinating the brochure and we want a chapter per decade – so if you have or know of programmes or photos from the 30's through to the 80's please let us know by return mail – no time to waste.

And I can hear you thinking “how is the ‘Manco 7’ going to pull this off and retain their marriages, sanities and jobs?” And you know my answer “we won’t unless the ‘we’ in ‘we’ includes you”. I look forward to your offers of support.



## Checkpoint #4: Sunday Learn to Row Clinics

We have been talking for some time about this new programme and it received highest priority in our planning work. However, we are concentrating all our efforts on a successful and financially rewarding Sprint over the next 10 weeks and so will start the programme in November.



The Manual is in drafting so that we can provide consistent coaching and this should be ready in the next month or so. We will hold some training sessions for us all to get to grips with the programme as volunteers. Let us know of anyone or company that would like to sponsor and brand the Manual (training-, educational-, management-, sports-, insurance companies).

We are thinking of taking on a maximum of 10 learners per programme of 4 weeks and will encourage all learners to take up membership. Our early discussions outside the Club indicate a keen and ready cadre of learners and we hope to run the programme repeatedly as a standard (and unique) feature of our Club, perhaps bi-monthly or even every 1<sup>1/2</sup> months if the demand is there. This will be the foundation of our recruitment plan. More on this as we get closer.

That’s it, easy all those eyeballs.



**Rod MacKinnon**

- Wemmer Pan website - <http://www.wemmer.co.za>
- Wemmer Pan on Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4633028538>
- Join our mailing list - <http://groups.google.com/group/wemmer>

