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NS14 ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEETING – March 2010

Via email from 2 March to 10 March 2010

AGENDA

1. Attendance and Apologies
2. Correspondence
3. 2010 Budget
 - (a) Budget
 - (b) Yearbook for 2010
4. Measurer's report
5. Website
6. Insurance
7. 2010/11 Nationals
8. Other business
 - Gathering Information for the Executive



Item 1: Attendance and apologies

National Executive members are:

Bill Kerrigan, President, kerrigan@inet.net.au
Sandra Donovan, NSW President, insdonovan@bigpond.com
Neil Murray, Queensland President, neilmurray1961@hotmail.com
Kathryn Burdon, South Australia President, kathrynburdon@internode.on.net
Darren Eggins, Tasmania President, deggins@netspace.net.au
National Secretary/Treasurer: Michael Hitchens, michael.hitchens@cyberone.com.au
National Registrar: Colin Wiley, colin.wiley@orica.com
National Measurer: David Johnson, dij@optusnet.com.au
NS14 Bulletin: David Bentley, bentleydrps@bigpond.com

Also guest observers in the meeting:

Paul Dillon, Victoria contact, pkcadillon@optusnet.com.au
Adrian Adams, Web manager, adrian@jaba.com.au
Michael Tait, NSW Past President, tait_fam@bigpond.net.au
Tim Dunstan, tim_dunstan@optusnet.com.au

Item 2: Correspondence (attached)

Letter to Rob Hyland, Hylec- thanking them for sponsorship of Queensland Nationals

Item 3: 2010 Budget

(a) Budget approved by the Council attached.

As a non-profit organisation with few liabilities, the Council should be looking for ways to use the funds (\$18,000) to benefit members. The major tasks of the Executive each year are to fund the National Titles and promote the class in States. It would be reasonable to consider spending up to \$2,000 per annum over the next few years to promote the class, in addition to the expenditure already approved in the budget.

RECOMMENDATION: Consistent with the strategic plan, proposals to promote the class be submitted to the President by members of the Executive in time for consideration by the Executive at its next meeting in May 2010.

Moved:

Seconded:

(b) Yearbook 2010

Background Report by David Bentley

I accepted Bulletin editor on the basis I was not producing a printed document - web based only. I do not have time to muck around with mailing lists and printers etc with a 60 hour a week job. However I did a couple of printed Bulletins during transition from Denise. I understand her difficulty in getting material on time and in sufficient quantity for a magazine. At the same time, the new website was started and this started publishing race results and summaries very quickly (sometimes on the Sunday night after racing) which meant (a) everyone had read it (b) putting it verbatim into the Bulletin was stale news (c) no-one wanted to do separate articles specially for the Bulletin. I continued doing pdf Bulletins up to the end of 2008 season.

That winter a Yearbook was proposed by Vic Martin, and committee endorsed it. This would a summary of the year and would not compete with the Bulletin, and could be prepared over winter.

So I have done the 08-09 Yearbook. I had some production problems (my computer crashed and corrupted the file - and the then crashed a second time when I opened the backup file, and corrupted that as well) so I had to rebuild the document from scratch. It's 94 pages long. It took all winter to get material from people, I still received contributions in September, having started in April. Some people of course were prompt, but not all. By the time I finished, it was busy season at work (I have 27 audits over 3 months) and the committee then set too small a budget for printing. I wasted time chasing printers trying to get cheaper quotes, to little result. Then decided I needed a holiday and here we are.

Originally planned A4 size - cost around \$5000 for 150 copies, going to print B4 (same as previous Bulletins) for \$2500. Currently doing a little reformatting since originally formatted for A4 not B4, should be printed in next week or so.

The new Committee has decided to underwrite at this cost. Plan is free to everyone who has paid capitation fees \$20 to everyone else. We considered getting advertising sponsorship for next year to subsidise printing and maybe go to larger size. Previous (black and white) Bulletin cost between \$400-\$600 to print and mail x 4 times a year = \$2000-2500 so comparable cost, but I haven't factored postage in yet on the Yearbook (I used to get my company to pay!)

Issues:

Quarterly Bulletin is hard unless you are connected and pushy and have the time and competes against the web site for currency of information. The website has effectively replaced the Bulletin.

Yearbook idea is a good idea as it creates an archive for the year. Getting material is still hard - half of the current material is sourced from club web sites. Therefore it is a lot of work (not only to source material, but layout etc as well) - think several multiples of time on the water. Colour printing is expensive and has proved more costly than expected. A national mailing list seems nebulous.

The Executive committed to the publication of the 2009 Yearbook and should stick with that commitment.

For the future, full use of the website is likely to be more cost-effective than a printed Yearbook.

RECOMMENDATION: Print and Publish the 2009 Yearbook. Publish a 2010 Bulletin Yearbook on the website, but do not print. No longer publish quarterly Bulletins.

Moved:

Seconded:



Item 4: Measurer's report

MGs as NSs

Background

The aim is to examine the issues surrounding the measurement of MG14's as NS14's with a view to allowing MG14's to compete in National and State NS14 events, thus bolstering numbers.

Issues

There are three issues namely: safety; unfair advantage; and compliance.

Safety is a serious issue for the following reasons:

1. The boats are different so the extra length may not be allowed for when boats cross.
2. The severity of any collision will increase as front-on contact is necessarily over a small contact area.
3. At the last Nationals there were several such collisions where boats were able to sail on and finish. The impact of a bowsprit would, most likely have resulted in serious injury or damage.

From a risk perspective, the likelihood of a collision is increased marginally and the consequences are increased greatly.

Unfair Advantage: Boats with bowsprits will be advantaged on Starboard crossings, however complying boats will be disadvantaged when they have rights. Mass at the end of boats does affect performance in choppy conditions.

Compliance: It is clear that currently boats with bowsprits do not comply. Some, not all MG's do not comply with the Length Overall measurement due to the presence of a bow sprit or prodder stump. MG's which comply have the prodder stump flush with the bow and no projections at the waterline.

Those that do not comply have either a bowsprit or prodder which projects some 50-100mm or more from the bow of the boat, or they have a stainless plate at the waterline that extends the waterline by some 5 -10mm or both.

Any rule change would need to address the safety issues as well as setting a maximum limit for the bowsprit. The rule would have to ensure that the bowsprit is not used for other purposes such as sail attachment etc.

Consideration should also be given to whether these MG's can alter their arrangement to fit our rules. My opinion is that, in all cases that I have observed, it would not be too difficult to fix this.

RECOMMENDATION: A proposal be developed by the National Measurer in consultation with State measurers for a constitutional change to the rules. Protection such as silicon rubber stopper could be required as well as bright colouring to make it obvious. The maximum length could be say 100mm.

Moved:

Seconded:



Item 5: Website

Background report by Adrian Adams

The NS14 website was previously run by Hugh Tait and at the time was attracting around 2000 visits per month. The site had some serious design issues and some features did not work. One year before the Nationals in Adelaide we were canvassing possible sponsors. When we got a bite from Club Financial Services we followed this up with a presentation.

On the day we presented the site went down ... And when we did get it back up again the sponsor took one look and said, absolutely NO ... We do not want our brand to appear on a site that looks so “tacky”.

I then reported this back to Michael Tait (the President at the time) and offered to do something about it. I run a web development company and designing websites is my core business. My company (JABA) can design and build a powerful backend that allows for complete content management of the site. Each state could have access to their section and update content easily whenever required. We would normally charge about \$12,000 for a site like this, however I offered to do all the design and content migration for no cost and offered a discounted rate on the technical development ... Reducing the overall cost to just \$5000.

This was rejected by the Association.

I was then left in an awkward situation regarding the sponsorship for the Nationals in Adelaide. The only way we could secure that sponsorship was to redesign the site to create a more professional look that did accommodate sponsors logos and links. To do this I offered to hand make the site without any content management systems for no cost at all. I have done this now and have been manually updating the site ever since for no cost.

When the new site went live (with the sponsors onboard) the traffic started to increase immediately. The site (two years later) now attracts more than 10,000 visits a month (five times what it did previously).

The only costs for the NS14 Association is the ongoing hosting costs at Internode. These are less than \$400 per year. It is by far the cheapest and most effective way to communicate with members. Compare this with the cost of printed materials or other forms of marketing.

The other “cost” is my time ... This is only a cost to me at the moment, I do not charge for this time. I spend about 2-3 hours per week on the website ... Updating content, moderating the forum and answering emails. Some emails I forward on to others to answer but most I do myself. I do Boat for Sale updates once a week, usually on Friday nights and I do a stats check once every two weeks.

I receive 1-3 emails per day from the NS14 site. Most are enquiries from people who do not currently sail an NS14 but are interested in joining the class. About a third of these emails come from NS14 members who complain about the lack of content or the delay in getting a boat listing updated or just complain about the site, saying it is



crap and should be completely revamped and updated. None of these people ever offer a solution ... Just the advice.

There appears to be a perception out there that because I offered to be the webmaster this means that I will also write all the content. This never was on the table ... Right from the beginning I alerted the association about this stating clearly that the content was NOT my responsibility and that each state would need to provide ongoing updates and news items. This rarely happens and consequently the complaints come in and I get the blame.

As a result, my company (JABA) sponsors a website that mainly gets criticised by the very people it is supposed to support. As a web developer this is hardly a good outcome and our sponsorship seems to have an overall negative result for JABA not a positive one. We have also not received a single lead from this sponsorship.

Other sponsors seem to get a good deal ... They get hyperlinks and brand exposure for not much input. There is no management of these sponsors and there appears to be no direction from the association about the ongoing benefits the site provides.

The biggest frustration for me and my company is that we receive very positive emails from other classes and yacht clubs. Some say that the NS14 site is the best sailing association site of them all, yet according to the majority of feedback from NS14 sailors it is complete crap!

Since I have decided to stay with the class (I just bought a Tequilla 2000, NS14_1962) I am ok to continue as webmaster. I would like to address the negative feedback and the lack of value to JABA as a sponsor. Alternatively, if you wish to revamp the site and use someone else then I am ok with that too. I am not a control freak!

Re: Advertising ... I have received a once off payment of \$100 for the text based advertisement on the Boats for Sale page. This was discussed with Steve Jones and Chris Gardiner at the time. After they approved the concept I asked them to set up a Pay Pal account to receive this money but they did not respond in time and after six weeks the money was transferred to my personal Pay Pal account. My kids have since then spent the money on Itunes!!! This has been my only "income" from the site.

Re: the Stats ... I have attached a snapshot of the last 12 months traffic to the NS14 site. You will notice that in January we attracted a record 12,773 visits which equates to more than 500,000 hits in that month alone. The site has been increasing steadily over the last two years and in October last year hit the 10,000 visits per month mark. This figure is considered by the industry as a starting point for advertisers. Most internet advertisers will not look at sites with less than 10,000 visits per month.

In January the most popular sections of the website were
Hytec Regatta Wrap
Boats for Sale
Photo Gallery
NSW
Australia
News
QLD



History
NS14 Register
Rules

Most traffic came from Australia (73%) with international hits coming from
USA
Brazil
Russia
New Zealand
Malaysia
UK
Germany
Argentina
Poland
Ivory Coast

I can provide more detail about the stats if required.

Issues:

Adrian Adams was asked to set up the web site a few years ago, to become a proper National site. The options were at the time:

- Pay Adrian \$5000 to get a fully automated site, accessible by all states to incorporate their own updates. Get an onsite Forum. This was not done on cost grounds.

OR

- a webmaster built site, page by page, which takes hands on approach to all updates (by someone who needs to write code) take an offsite hosted web Forum. This is what we now have.

Adrian manually adds to the site in his time, and for the moment he is happy to do this. This is not however a long-term option.

The forum had a lot of set-up discussion, because it can become an unofficial way to send around information, and misinformation. The web master has to manually edit comments, which is time consuming.

The longer term issues will be

- Cost of hosting, \$300-\$400 a year
- This is NS14 National and should therefore look good
- Need for web master who can put in time, and one who understands website hosting, which limits our options
- Need to pay for automated site to be operational
- Even when automated, the webmaster will need to apply strict rules for those in the States that have approval to upload
- People do not understanding how a Volunteer site is put together and complaints about it being out of date etc (there are generally 2-3 complaints a week from people who want things in a hurry and don't understand how it works. And one complement a month from other class sites, who admire what's going on
- .Advertising - this is almost not happening. Do we get suppliers to pay, or do we allow outside ads. There are about 10,000 hits on the site a month now.



RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive express its gratitude to JABA for its development and support of the website. That JABA be invited to submit a costed proposal to further develop the site with content management systems so that a person designated by each State can upload material on their respective State sites subject to JABA rules. The NS14 Association would pay for any agreed website upgrade.

Moved:

Seconded:



Item 6: Insurance

Issue: Propose that, in its role as organiser of the National Championships, the Executive have a Policy that covers 3rd party insurance of boats and crews at events. This proposal is covered by Governance Section 4.2 in the constitution.

Insurance is a variable thing around Australia, and can become subject to State and Territory Laws. Having a policy that the Executive has to follow is a simpler solution than having a constitutional amendment that may need changing because of differing states laws.

When published on the web site under Policies of the Council and Executive, with a date of implementation, it will become as widely known as the constitution itself.

RECOMMENDATION

*3rd Party Insurance Policy
(Insert Date)*

The National Executive must ensure that all boats at National Events have 3rd party insurance coverage that is adequate for the State in which the event is held. The level of coverage shall be determined with reference to the circumstances of the State where the event is held.

Moved:

Seconded:



Item 7: 2010/11 Nationals

Issue: The ACT provided the Executive with a draft proposal for the 2010/11 Nationals for consideration by 28th February.

Responses to date suggest support for a 7 to 9 race series with predominately long-courses. A lay-day is preferred.

Recommendation: The National Executive endorse the attached 42nd Championship program.

Moved:

Seconded:

Item 8: Other business

-Gathering information for the Executive needs to be formalised – especially for the registrar and Measurer.

A proposal

Twice a year (1st Nov and 1st May) the Executive ask states to update the Membership list , and thus Capitation Fees and the Registration and Measurement reports and certificates. This will allow regular updates that take in the Start of the season memberships and Registrations, before National Titles, and the end of the season final flurry of registrations and measurements that accompany the many State Titles. Discussion is appreciated. This will be on Next Council Agenda to possibly become a Policy.

-Members are invited to send an email with other issues they wish discussed and determined by the Executive.