



President's Report to Brindabella Ski Club AGM 23 March 2024

Wow, where has the time gone, I can hardly believe as I sit down to type my Report, that a year has flown by and my first year as President is complete. Thankfully, my first year in the role was somewhat business as usual; especially when you compare the challenges that the Club and our Committee faced over the year prior. This, in some way, was the perfect environment to step into this role, one where I had time to find my feet and try and fill those very large shoes left by James.

While the Aussie Winter may not have delivered what we all hoped for with snowfalls, it was great to see our operations settle back into normality and our lodges generally full. Throughout the year the Committee was able to continue to alleviate some of the additional rules and processes that were required during COVID to try and reduce the added demand on Members and their Guests. This included the removal of the Mandatory Vaccination Policy for Winter season. Whilst it is still important, we are all conscious of our health and communal living when staying at the lodges, it has been nice to come back together as a unified Club with less focus on COVID and health related processes.

It was excellent to see the return of the President Cocktail parties to kick of the 2023 winter season. Two very successful events were held in Sydney and Canberra with around eighty (80) members in attendance across the two events. The Cocktail parties have always been a highlight of mine, and this hasn't changed now I am hosting as President. The parties are a great opportunity to connect with new and old friends within the Club and really demonstrates the community spirit of our Club. Special thanks to Holly Lawrence who managed to find time to organise the events whilst balancing learning her new role as Admin Manager. Keep an eye on your email for dates for the 2024 events and I hope to see even more Members in attendance this year.

Finances

Whilst I will do my best not to steal the thunder of our esteemed treasurer Russell Kerrison, it would be remis of me not to comment on the secure financial position the Club finds itself in currently. This outcome is testament to past Committees actions to ensure we, as a Club, navigated some serious challenges yet remain financially secure and are well placed to react to future issues as needed.

Whilst some may see a large cash in bank outcome a reason to start spending or potentially look to reduce membership costs, it is important to remember that the general cost of running the Club continues to increase year-on-year and we rely on membership fees and accommodation charges to cover this increase. Whilst our lodges are generally in great shape, it has been several years since any substantial maintenance and capital works have been conducted. Large cost items such as carpet, whole of lodge painting or larger capital works will need to be considered over the coming year/s to ensure our lodges remain in a condition we, as members expect. Continuing to focus on improving our financial position through fiscal responsibility allows the Club to be flexible in approaching these large capital works whilst continuing to be somewhat insulated from an unexpected disaster level event.

Lodges

Our lodges continue to offer great accommodation for our members. Where possible and appropriate, the Committee will look to ensure any member, amenity offered or added to one of the lodges is standardised across all three lodges. In saying this, there will always be small differences between lodges as they are in different locations and offer different levels of accommodation, however, for those Members that stay across multiple lodges know what to expect is important. This policy was seen this last Winter season with the installation of Starlink across the three lodges offering internet in the Guthega lodges for the first time and improvement to the internet service that has always been in Waragun. As well as the replacement of coffee machines across all lodges to more user-friendly machines.

Work Parties continue to be an important and necessary key activity to keep our lodges in top shape while limiting costs. It is the foundation that the Club was built on with our community of members giving back. The work party weekends are not just all about work and are wonderfully hosted by the Lodge VP's; if you ask anyone who attends the Saturday night dinner, they are always a highlight. An email was sent out earlier this month to hold the date for Autumn May work parties across all lodges; please consider attending one if you have the time.

Tiobunga

Tio kept us on our toes this year with a failure of the Zip hot water boiler bringing flashbacks to a certain 2018 flood. Thankfully members reported the leak and with a quick response from our two Guthega VP's, Rob Griffin and Mat Wolnicki, any major damage was avoided. While timing was tight to resolve prior to the start of the Winter season, the team managed to get a carpet layer up from Canberra to replace the carpet and have the lounge back up and operational prior to the school holidays beginning. The carpet is almost identical to the previous carpet, and I would be interested to hear if anyone not aware of the leak, spotted the difference!

The Zip Boil was unable to be repaired and remained out of action for the 2023 Winter season. I am happy to report that there will be a new instant hot water boiler installed in

time for Winter. The unit is similar to the boiler in Kyilla, in that it has a dedicated font and sink for the hot water with the boiler installed out of sight beneath the cabinet.

Kyilla

Due to previous water ingress into Kyilla, it was discovered during a work party that there was extensive damage in Room 2 that urgently had to be rectified prior to the Winter season starting. While the job itself was fairly straight forward, due to the structural element being replaced, it put the Committee into discussions, or should I say frustrations, with the NSW Department of Planning. Unfortunately, the process of gaining work orders to rectify something like this are no longer being issued within the Park which left us with only the option of either a full development application or completing complying development certificate, the latter being the option the Committee chose to adopt. Thankfully everything came through in time to have Room 2 ready at the start of the season. It really was a complex process to resolve a minor issue! There is still work to be done on the A frame beams which will require a full DA and our experience on Room 2 shows it will be a complex process even if the work required is generally straightforward.

Waragun

With a change in VP at Waragun this year, there has seen several maintenance tasks completed as Eskil Julliard found his feet and begun planning for works in the future. Opening in 2004, Waragun is now approaching 20 years, there will be a need for some works across the Summer to replace carpet, paint and the kitchen sanitiser that is reaching its end of life.

Of course, this was the season of Zip boils with the Waragun boiler also failing during the season. This will be replaced at the same time as Tiobunga with an identical device prior to the beginning of the Winter season.

Snowsport Development and Racing

It has been no secret that I have a keen interest in Snowsports racing and was eager to see our Club invest once again in development and racing. We are after all, a Snowsports Club that exists to promote the sport for our members and receive tax exemptions as a direct result of this. Our Club history is littered with exceptional racers, not to mention one our members, Jarryd Hughes, being an Olympic silver medallist in Snowboard Cross. While we still have a pocket of passionate racers within the Club it is my hope that we can continue to build a strong group of members that love racing for the Club. Race events are not only fun but always excellent Club days. We get to spend time as a community, encouraging one another and celebrating our results, some of which unexpected!

Our winter programs kicked off with the Snowsports Development Camp now in its 8th year with attendance from 41 participants. A massive thank you to our organisers Bruce and Jenny Hartican who have been at the helm since the inaugural camp all those years ago. This camp is more than just improving your skiing and boarding, it is about building relationships within the Club that you may not do otherwise. The premise of the camp is all members contribute and are involved as a group. It embraces the spirit our Club was built on and I hope is building the next generation of club mates that we will see battle it out on the race pistes of senior Interclubs for years to come.

The Ski and Board Development Camp leads nicely into the Guthega Interclubs. These races are for members of Guthega clubs of all ages and always a lot of fun. We had a great turnout of 24 racers. I would have to say one of more successful years, with Sarah Heaton taking out 1st place for Female Snowboard and our awesome foursome of Mark Carey, Mark Jacquemin, Mal Utley and Bruce Hartican winning for the first time ever, the Guthega Interclub Team Handicap Trophy.

Next cab off the rank was a return to BSC competing at the Thredbo Junior Interclubs after several years of absence. Special mention goes to Mia Hancock who scored a bronze medal in the U11 girls.

As the season marched on, so did the Race meets with clearly (my bias) favourite race, the Thredbo Senior Interclubs. BSC was well represented with 13 budding racers who, considering the race is filled with Olympians and up and coming national team members, did fantastic! The highlight being a 2nd place in the fastest team of 5 on Handicap and 4th Overall Thredbo Club (the best of the Clubs without an Olympian racing for them).

Next up was our very own BSC Club Championships held in Thredbo on the Rosi Racecourse. This event is a race dedicated for only our club members and is a great fun way to have your first experience on a racecourse. We had a wonderful turnout on the day with our youngest racer being 4 years old (Darcy Troy) and our oldest was 84 (Ian Mcfarlane). We finished the day with a lovely presentation in the Kosi Room in Thredbo for all racers, and those that couldn't race and were staying at the Waragun lodge. Hopefully this has created some Club rivalries to be challenged this season when it will be run in Perisher.

Finally, as the season grew to a close (and the snow was disappearing fast) we participated in the 90th year of the Balmain Cup. Huge congratulations to Gina Hartican taking out the George Dudzinski Trophy for the best combined times in three of the four disciplines.

I do want to call out our Club Captain, Jade Hancock who went above and beyond this season to create an excellent line up of events, and to what can only be described as herding cats, get members signed up and at the starting gate for races. I look forward to seeing what is coming for this season.

Wrap up

Well that's it for a recap on my first year as President. I am so proud and humbled to have the opportunity to lead our historic Club into its next capture. As a self-described Thredbo tragic, there are still many members for me to meet and get to know and I hope to do that over the coming seasons and at the yet to be announced President Cocktail parties.

I would like to acknowledge those who joined me on the Committee this year. Our wonderful Club needs volunteers to ensure it is operating effectively, without a strong committee this would not be possible. Thank you to Russell Kerrison, Ghafur Barchia, Rob Griffin, Eskil Julliard, Mat Wolnicki, Meg Smythe, Jade Hancock, Ben Coutts and Warwick Forster. As well as Darrel and Rob who stepped down from their positions during the year after a long tenure on the Committee. I also want to thank all members who step up and volunteer for our club; we are a club based on volunteers and without club members putting their hand up to volunteer we would be in trouble. Finally, I'd like to thank the Club's employees and contractors: Kellie, Lynne, Paul, Sonia, and Holly all of whom are integral to the smooth operations of our Club and always go above and beyond for us.

Ben Troy
President
Brindabella Ski Club