

President's Report for TUHA Annual General Meeting – 27th July 2011

Looking back over the past 12 months, overall I think we can say it was another good year for our Association. There were many significant highlights. They include (in approximate chronological order):

- Another successful Schools Comp in 2010, finishing in late August. Many thanks to Junior Development Officer, Ian Shanahan, Sandra Milner and all others who assisted in the running of that comp.
- The trip by 11 of our Junior players to Christchurch, for the 26th New Zealand Schools Underwater Hockey Championships, during first week of September. Many thanks again to Sandra and Ian (Coach in Hobart), and to Mark Jones (Coach during the comp), and to the parents who accompanied the teams to NZ and assisted. By all accounts it was a very successful trip.
- Natalie Wickham and Simon Talbot competed at the Asian Underwater Hockey Championships in Manila, Philippines, during 29 - 31 October.
- A successful Pennant 2-2010 Comp, with winners Red Dogs (A Grade), Old Puckers (B Grade) and The Grizzlies from Hell (C Grade). Best & Fairest winners were Nick Martyn (A Grade), Andy Maver (B Grade), and David Rush (C Grade).
- Social events – End of Year/Xmas BBQ at Lauderdale. Once again, many thanks to our Social Director, Jason Whelan (and many helpers) for making that a great day. And we also again acknowledge the great support provided by Aqua Scuba Diving Services, Prince of Wales Hotel, and Sush in providing great prizes for the end-of-year raffle.
- A great performance by our 5 teams at the Nationals in Canberra in March, with 2 gold medals (Juniors U19A and Masters) and 1 silver medal (Womens). And big thanks to Sandra Milner as Tas Teams Manager, and to our fantastic, dedicated State coaches and refs.
- The selection at the Nationals of 14 Tasmanian players for the Australian Team Squads (1 in the Womens, 2 in the Mens, 2 in the Masters, 9 in the Junior Mens squads).
- The continued strong presence by TUHA in Underwater Hockey Australia, with Simon Talbot (Chief Referee), Fiona Walsh (Financial Controller), and myself (Communications Officer) holding 3 of the 7 UHA Committee positions.
- In April, the commencement of TUHA School's Comp 2011 under the expert organisation of Ian Shanahan and Sandra Milner, and with many helpers!
- Also in April, we were successful in obtaining a \$2250 Sport and Recreation Tasmania grant that will be used for purchasing equipment to assist further development of underwater hockey in Launceston. Many thanks to Garry Davidson for his work in putting that grant application together and for his ongoing efforts in encouraging expansion of our sport in the north of the State.
- A successful Pennant 1-2011 Comp, with winners Red Dogs (A Grade), Crabs (B Grade) and The Grizzlies from Hell (C Grade). Best & Fairest winners for this pennant arethat's secret.....Come to the AGM and find out!!
- A couple of weeks ago, the introduction of a Women's League comp on Monday nights, initiated and coordinated by David Lambert. TUHA owes a big thank you to David for getting this comp up and running. It will undoubtedly produce many benefits for strengthening our Womens Nationals teams ahead, but also for strengthening the sport for our female players (young and not-so-young) in general.
- Most recently, we have had 9 of our U19 Junior players compete extremely well (4th out of 9 teams and close results, despite major illness to a number of players) at the Open Youth and Master Underwater Hockey Tournament 2011, 9 - 16 July, in Dordrecht, The Netherlands, and Simon Talbot was a member of the Australian Masters team at these championships. Nick Martyn was Coach of the Juniors and Sandra Milner was Teams

Manager. And Pieter van der Woude, Simon and Nick did heaps of reffing. So, once again Tassie underwater hockey was featuring very prominently at international level.

However, I think we need to acknowledge that there were some not-so-good aspects of the past year:

- We still have no D Grade as our entry grade for new players into our seniors league, and we have been relying on there being enough space in C Grade teams to accommodate new players. We are in the tricky situation of rapidly approaching maximum capacity in our C Grade teams but don't yet have enough new players to make up two or more D Grade teams. But we have embarked on a strong recruiting strategy for this new year so hopefully we'll see D Grade return in 2012.
- Although we are extremely grateful to those who have guild reffed during the past year, it continues to be a real struggle to cover as many games as we would like with Guild Refs. In last year's President's report I said we (the Committee) were looking "at every way possible for increasing the average level of player's knowledge of rules (and in particular, the finer points of the various fouls)" and that "this education of the rules has to start early, in Schools Comp". But we didn't do anything on that front during the past year and had no reffing courses nor provided other ways of increasing that knowledge of rules for our junior and senior players. However, our Chief Referee, Nick Martyn, has not been twiddling his thumbs and has been extremely busy making very significant contributions to our sport on other fronts (including his recent coaching of the Australian Juniors team and of our Tassie Mens team at the Nationals.....and playing and reffing in several high level comps himself). So, I don't think we should point digits at Nick in any way whatsoever. It needs to be a joint effort and we'll be making it the number 1 priority for this new year (2011/2012).

As I indicated in an earlier uwh-announce message, this year's AGM sees the retirements of a few of our current Committee members - Colin Hepher (Treasurer), Jason Whelan (Social Director), and Bruce Ransley (Newsletter Editor). And a few months ago Steve Cleary stepped down as Development Officer. On behalf of all in TUHA, I express our immense thanks to these wonderful, dedicated persons. Colin deserves special mention as he has been our Treasurer for 16 years and he has served on TUHA Committees since the mid-80's!

Big thanks also goes to Christian Morford Waite for his great work as Desk Attendant for the past year. Very soon we will be moving our TUHA website to a new website designed by Christian. Stay tuned!

And now I'll finish by thanking all my fellow Committee members for their great work over the past year and to everyone in TUHA for your support for me in the President's position during the past 2 years. As I said in a recent uwh-announce email, although I am now stepping down to take a break and let someone else have a stint, I like the idea of perhaps having another term as President sometime in the future. It is a very rewarding job and enjoyable. Truly! But I never got the much promised reserved parking spot!

Craig Proctor

26/07/2011.